

**The impact of the Community Based Public Works Programme of the
Department of Public Works in Groutville**

N Mthembu

Thesis presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of
Public Administration at the University of Stellenbosch



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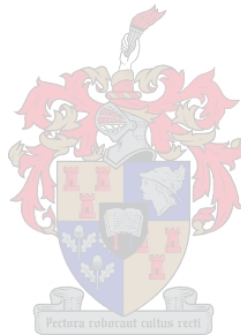
December 2003

Declaration

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is my own original work and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it at any university for a degree.

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Summary

The basic principles of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) include “an integrated and sustainable programme” and “a people-driven process”. Section 2.3 of the RDP identifies the National Public Works Programme (NPWP) as a key implementation strategy of the RDP, with the primary purpose of creating jobs and providing community infrastructure, in a manner that impacts on the socio-economic conditions of the poor (ANC, 1994:1-18). The NPWP was operationalised in late 1995 as a Community Based Public Works Project (CBPWP) to carry out this broad mandate.

Government was faced by numerous challenges in the form of poverty, joblessness, a shrinking economy and lack of job-related skills. The expectations were also high that after long years of struggle and suffering, an ANC-led Government would deliver a better life soon. Wittingly or unwittingly, in the face of these challenges and mounting expectations, Government rushed to deliver a better life through school feeding schemes, free health care to children under the age of six and to pregnant women and allocated about R250m to the Department of Public Works to deliver a job creation and poverty relief programme. It was this rush that saw the Government losing sight of important conditions for sustainable delivery of goods and services.

The purpose of the study is to show that the Community Based Public Works Programme of the Department of Public Works, which was implemented in Groutville in 1996, failed to bring about visible change. The starting point is to create a contextual framework for the research problem and the suggested answer (Bless & Higson - Smith, 1995:37), which is established through various means in the sections that follow. The first part, the literature review, offers both conceptual and operational definitions (Bless & Higson - Smith, 1995:35-37) of key concepts or variables that form elements of the research problem and the proposed hypothesis. Methodology and research design outlines the process, procedure and instruments used to test the hypothesis. The section on data analysis gives an overview on how data on the general field of interest (Brynard & Hanekom, 1997:48-50), community development (De Beer & Swanepoel, 1998:17-28), is filtered to focus on the National Public Works Programme (NPWP) and the Community Based Public Works Programme (CBPWP) as strategies for community development, using Groutville as a case study. As part of data analysis, using the model of Brynard & Hanekom (1997:54-55) viewpoints of authors on community development are integrated in the context of the

results and data obtained. Finally, the study outlines and discusses the results and recommendations.

The reliability and generalizability of the findings is based on consistence between the findings of this particular study and the CASE/ILO Report, on the one hand, and the empirical evidence as provided by grassroots structures and as observed by the researcher. The study finds that while the project succeeded in targeting women and youth, employment opportunities could not be sustained. In addition there is no evidence of training and the ability of employees to use skills gained during the life of the project to earn a decent living. Finally, the study also finds that one of the major failures of the CBPWP, in addition to a lack of sustainability, was that it was not co-ordinated and integrated with other local development initiatives such as the Masakhane Campaign, the Clean and Green Campaign and the Local Economic Development Plan.

The study concludes by suggesting recommendations, which include: -

- The need to redefine sustainability in a way that does not emphasize the quality and life span of infrastructure but prioritizes the beneficiaries' ability to use the infrastructure and skills gained to engage in productive economic activities;
- Recognize local leadership and built capacity before a project is introduced;
- Focus, as part of capacity building, on institutional development and organizational development for local communities;
- Communicate and seek consensus on the goals and intended objectives of the programme;
- Link national programmes with local economic development plans and initiatives and education and training for life-long employment.

Opsomming

Die basiese beginsels van die Heropbou en Ontwikkelingsprogram (HOP) sluit 'n geïntegreerde volhoubare program en 'n gemeenskapsgeïnspireerde proses in. Die Nasionale Openbare Werke Program (NOWP) is as 'n sleutel implementeringstrategie geïdentifiseer in klousule 2.3 van die HOP met die primêre doel om werkverskaffing en die voorsiening van infrastruktuur aan die gemeenskap te lewer. Die primêre doel is om 'n impak te lewer op die sosio-ekonomiese toestand van die hulpbehoewende persoon. (ANC, 1994:1-18). Die NOWP is in 1995 as 'n Gemeenskapsgebaseerde Openbare Werke Program in werking gestel om hierdie breë mandaat uit te voer.

Die Staat was gekonfronteer met verskeie uitdagings wat onder andere armoede, werkloosheid, 'n krimpende ekonomie en die gebrek aan toepaslike werksgeoriënteerde vaardighede ingesluit het. Hoë verwagtinge is van die ANC regering gekoester om na die lang jare van stryd en lyding 'n beter lewe vir almal te verseker. Wetende of onwetende, in die aangesig van al hierdie uitdagings en verwagtinge, het die Staat beleid bepaal wat daarop gemik was om dienstelewering te versnel ten einde 'n beter lewe te waarborg. Hierdie beleid het voedingskemas by skole en gratis gesondheidsorg aan kinders onder die ouderdom van ses jaar en verwagte vroue verskaf. Daar is ook 'n bedrag van R250 miljoen bewillig aan die Departement van Openbare Werke om 'n armoedeverligting en werkverskaffingsprogram daar te stel. Dit was as gevolg van hierdie druk waaronder die Staat verkeer het, dat die belangrike vereistes vir volhoubare lewering van goedere en dienste uit die oog verloor is.

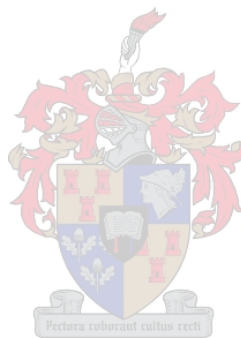
Die doel van hierdie studie is om te bewys dat die Gemeenskapsgebaseerde Openbare Werke Program, soos onder andere geïmplementeer in Groutville in 1996, nie daarin geslaag het om enige merkbare veranderinge teweeg te bring nie. Die aanvangspunt vir hierdie studie is om 'n kontekstuele raamwerk vir die navorsingsprobleem daar te stel, met toepaslike moontlike oplossings, (Bless & Higson - Smith, 1995:37), wat geskep is deur verskeie middele te ondersoek in die gedeeltes wat volg. Die eerste gedeelte, naamlik die literatuurstudie, verskaf konseptuele en algemene gebruiksdefinisies (Bless & Higson - Smith, 1995:35-37) van sleutelkonsepte of veranderlikes wat die kritiese elemente van die navorsingsprobleem en die voorgestelde hipotese vorm. Die metodiek en navorsingsontwerp-raamwerk omskryf die proses, prosedure en instrumente wat gebruik is om die hipotese te toets. Die gedeelte oor data-analise gee 'n oorsig oor hoe die data wat

betrekking het op die algemene veld van belangstelling (Brynard & Hanekom, 1997:48-50), naamlik gemeenskapsontwikkeling (De Beer & Swanepoel, 1998:17-28) gefiltreer is om te fokus op die Nasionale Openbare Werke Program en die Gemeenskapsgebaseerde Openbare Werke Program wat as strategieë vir gemeenskapsontwikkeling in die Groutville gevallestudie gebruik is. As deel van die data-analise is die Bryard & Hanekom (1997:54-55) model gebruik om verskillende standpunte van verskeie skrywers aangaande gemeenskapsontwikkeling te integreer met die resultate en die inligting wat ingesamel is. Die laaste afdeling bespreek die bevindinge en maak aanbevelings.

Bevindinge in hierdie studie gemaak kan as algemeen betroubaar beskou word. Die stelling word gebaseer op die feit dat 'n konsekwente ooreenstemming telkemale verkry is tussen die bevindinge van die spesifieke studie soos vervat in die CASE/ILO - verslag, en die empiriese bewyslewering, soos voorsien deur voetsoolvlak gemeenskapstrukture en soos waargeneem deur die navorser. Bevindinge van die studie sluit die volgende in; die Groutville projek het daarin geslaag om vroue en die jeug te betrek, maar dit kon nie daarin slaag om volhoubare werkverskaffing te verskaf nie. Daar kon ook geen bewys gevind word dat opleiding plaasgevind het nie, en die werknemers wat vaardighede aangeleer het gedurende die verloop van die projek, kon nie hul vermoë bewys om hierdie vaardighede sodanig aan te wend om 'n ordentlike bestaan te voer nie. Ten slotte het die studie bevind dat een van die hoof tekortkominge van die GBOWP was, tesame met die gebrek aan volhoubaarheid van die program, die gebrek aan ko-ordinasie en integrering met ander plaaslike ontwikkelingsinisiatiewe, soos onder andere die Masakhane projek, die "Clean and Green" projek en die plaaslike ekonomiese ontwikkelingsplan. Die laaste gedeelte van die studie stel die volgende aanbevelings voor:

- Om volhoubaarheid op plaaslike vlak so te definieër dat die klem nie geplaas word op die lewensverwagting van infrastruktuur nie, maar dat voorkeur eerder verleen word aan die vermoë van die gemeenskap om hierdie infrastruktuur te gebruik, en die vaardighede wat aangeleer is in die proses, om betrokke te raak in produktiewe volhoubare ekonomiese aktiwiteite;
- Om plaaslike leierskap te erken, en om toepaslike bekwaamhede op te bou, voordat 'n projek aangebied en geïmplementeer word;
- As deel van die opbou van bekwaamhede, moet klem geplaas word op institusionele en organisatoriese ontwikkeling van plaaslike gemeenskappe;

- Eenstemmigheid moet verkry word rakende die doelwitte van die program;
- Skakel nasionale programme in by plaaslike ekonomiese ontwikkelingsplanne en inisiatiewe, en verseker opvoeding en opleiding vir lewenslange indiensneming.



Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the following people for the help and support they provided to me during the course of this study;

My supervisor, Francois Theron, for his guidance and constructive comments especially during the contact session in February 2000 and for his understanding when I asked to re-arrange my research schedule;

Mr. Mhlongo, the former Mayor of Stanger-KwaDukuza for his selfless support, comments and for providing me with access to a very exciting group in Groutville - the focus group;

My wife, Tozama for being extremely supportive and ever keen to proof read and critique my work;

The Director-General of the Department of Public Enterprises for his understanding and granting me leave whenever I needed to go to Groutville and Ms Helena Jacobs, Director: Planning, KwaDukuza Municipality for assistance with the afrikaans 'opsomming' and allowing me access to IDP- related literature;

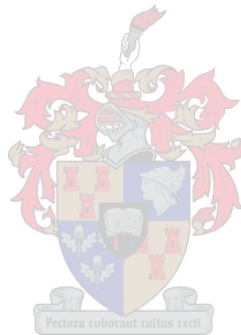
Mr. S Simelane, Director: Community Based Public Works Programme (CBPWP) at the Department of Public Works and his secretary for giving me access to their files on Siyakha and the Clean and Green Programme and

More importantly God and my Ancestors for giving me a chance to reorganize my life again and courage to continuously strive to realize my potential in education and in life in general.

Table of Contents

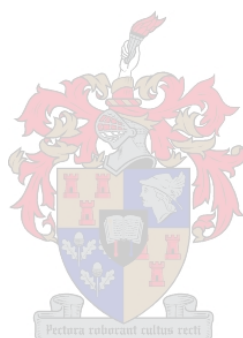
Declaration	ii
Summary	iii
Opsomming	v
Acknowledgements	viii
Table of Contents	ix
Tables and Figures	xiii
Acronyms	xiv
A. INTRODUCTION	1
1. Research Problem	1
2. Literature Review	2
2.1 Introduction	2
2.2 Clarification of Concepts	2
2.2.1 Public Works Programme and the Community Based Public Works Programme	2
2.2.2 Sustainability	3
2.2.3 The concept of development	3
2.2.4 The concept of participation	3
2.2.5 CBPWP as a model for community development	4
2.3 The Public Works Programme as a framework for sustainable development	4
2.3.1 Introduction	4
2.3.2 Objectives of the CBPWP	5
2.3.3 Empowerment of women	6
2.3.4 CBPWP and sustainability	8
2.3.5 An integrated approach	10
2.3.6 Job creation and training	11
2.3.7 Conclusion	13
2.4 Poverty as a challenge to sustainable development	14
2.4.1 Introduction	14
2.4.2 Defining poverty	14
2.4.3 Development or change agents	15
2.4.4 The notion of self-reliance	16
2.4.5 Indigenous knowledge as a resource for development	18
2.4.6 The socio-political context of poverty and development challenges in South Africa	19
2.4.7 Conclusion	22
2.5 Groutville : The need for a development intervention	23
2.5.1 Introduction	23

2.5.2	The social and historical profile of Groutville	24
2.5.3	Local economic issues	25
2.5.4	Conclusion	26
2.6	The CBPWP in Groutville: Siyakha and the Clean and Green Campaign – A Case Study	27
2.6.1	Introduction	27
2.6.2	Background	28
2.6.3	The Nature of Siyakha	28
2.6.4	The nature of the Clean and Green Campaign	30
2.6.5	Conclusion	31
3.	Problem statement	32
4.	The hypothesis and variables	33
5.	Operational formulation of the hypothesis	34
6.	The significance of the research	34
B.	RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	36
1.	Introduction	36
2.	Subjects	36
3.	Research instruments	37
4.	Analysis of variables	38
5.	Procedure	39
6.	Data analysis	40
6.1	Establishing the focus of the research	40
6.2	Integration of the viewpoints on Public Works Programmes	40
6.3	Integration of views on sustainable development	42
7.	Conclusion	44
C.	RESEARCH FINDINGS	46
1.	Introduction	46
2.	Summary of the findings	46
2.1	Level of public participation	46



2.2	Sustainability	49
2.2.1	Are the facilities operational?	49
2.3	Sustainability and maintenance of assets	50
2.4	Sustainability of employment opportunities	50
2.5	Empowerment	53
2.6	Empowerment through training	54
3.	Analysis of the hypothesis	55
D	DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION	58
1.	Discussion of the findings	58
1.1	Introduction	58
1.2	Public participation as a variable in the CBPWP in Groutville	58
1.3	Empowerment and capacity building in the CBPWP in Groutville	60
1.4	Sustainability of CBPWP in Groutville	62
1.5	A sustainable and integrated programme	62
1.6	Organizational capacity and community building	64
1.7	CBPWP and job creation in Groutville	65
1.8	Conclusion	66
2.	Summary of the findings	67
	Public participation	67
	Sustainability	68
	Sustainability and maintenance of assets	68
	Employment opportunities for women and youth	68
	Empowerment of women	68
	Socio-economic impact	69
3.	Validity and reliability in relation to the findings	69
4.	Generalization of the research findings	72
5.	Recommendations	73

Recognize local leadership and build-capacity	74
Institutional Development (ID) and Organizational Development (OD)	75
Local Economic Development (LED)	75
Communicate and seek consensus on the goals and intended objectives of a programme	76
Education and training for life-long empowerment	77
6.Conclusion	77
E.BIBLIOGRAPHY	79
F.APPENDICES	85



Tables and Figures

Table 1(a):	Unemployment by race and gender (Source, 1995, October Household Survey)	7
Table 1(b):	Unemployment in the poorest provinces (Source, 1995, October Household Survey)	8
Table 2(a):	Community participation during project identification stage	47
Table 2(b):	Community participation during project decision-making stage	47
Table 2(c):	Community participation during project implementation stage	48
Table 2(d):	Community participation during project identification stage, according to the Department of Public Works	48
Table 3(a):	The extent to which the Multi-purpose Community Center was used during the period November 2000 to 5 December 2000	49
Table 3(b):	An increase in the number of pupils enrolled at crèche as an indicator of parents recognition of the educational value of a crèche or pre-school to future learning over the period 1994 to 2001	49
Table 4(a):	Attitudes towards the projects as a source of employment during and after construction	51
Table 4(b):	Perceptions on which needs the project met the most even beyond construction phase	51
Table 5(a):	Perceived priorities of how the Government could help the poor	52
Table 5(b):	Priorities of local people in terms of their needs and expectations from Government	52
Table 6:	The socio-economic status of employees	53
Table 7:	Types of jobs done by local workers during construction phase	54
Figure 1:	A conceptual model of some of the critical inter-playing factors that impact on sustainable development	63

Acronyms

ANC-	African National Congress
CASE-	Community Agency for Social Enquiry
CBO-	Community Based Organization
CBPWP-	Community Based Public Works Programme
CDF-	Comprehensive Development Framework
ID-	Institutional Development
IDT-	Independent Development Trust
OD-	Organizational Development
IFP-	Inkatha Freedom Party
IKS-	Indigenous Knowledge Systems
ILO-	International Labour Organization
IRDS-	Integrated Rural Development Strategy
KSAB-	Keep South Africa Beautiful
NPWP-	National Public Works Programme
PLA-	Participatory Learning and Action
PAR	Participatory Action Research
PRA-	Participatory Rural Appraisal
RDP-	Reconstruction and Development Programme
SAB-	South African Breweries
SASA-	South African Sugar Association
SECP-	Special Employment Creation Programme

A. INTRODUCTION

1. Research Problem

The post-Apartheid Government adopted the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) as a developmental policy framework towards a better life for all (ANC, 1994:4). Job creation and capacity building were identified as strategic objectives of the RDP. The National Public Works Programme (NPWP) was identified as a strategy that would link provision of much needed infrastructure with job creation and sustainable development (ANC, 1994:4-19; White Paper on the RDP, 1994). The period 1994 to the beginning of 1995 was largely spent on putting policies and institutions in place to enable Government to deliver its promises. The period 1995 onwards saw the beginning of implementation of development programmes, operationalized as the National Public Works Programme, with focus on the poor and previously disadvantaged communities. The NPWP is seen as a special measure that could link social infrastructure such as access roads, clinics, schools etc. with job creation as a basis for community development (ANC, 1994:18).

The interest of the researcher was whether or not this theoretical framework for sustainable development did meet the desired objectives.

Groutville, a village outside Stanger, about 65 km north of Durban, was used as a case study with a focus on social infrastructure projects (Khosa, Magubane & Muthien, 2000:6), namely school classrooms, a crèche and a community center (Department of Public Works, Siyakha Project Appraisal Summary Report, 1996; and Mhlongo, December 2000), that were built in the 1995-96 financial year. Women and youth were targeted for jobs and training. There was a correlation between the primary target group – women and youth – and the type of projects chosen, namely classrooms, a community center and a crèche. A crèche would meet the ‘women’s basic needs such as child-care facilities’ and educational infrastructure would add value to the education of the youth (ANC, 1994:18-19).

There was also a causal relationship between the type of projects, methods of construction and the levels of joblessness and poverty in Groutville. The programme sought to use these assets, namely; classrooms, a crèche and a community center, as tools for job creation and sustainable development (Khosa, Magubane & Muthien, 2000:6). The question that this study sought to establish was whether through this social intervention, the Government was able to achieve sustainable development (ANC, 1994:4).

A number of evaluative reports on Public Works Programmes have been produced both by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the Community Agency for Social Enquiry (CASE), as well as consultants commissioned by the Department of Public Works itself in the 1997-98 financial year. Due to its broad scope, none of these reports seem to have focused significantly on the issue of “sustainability”. The section in this thesis that deals with sustainability focuses on the life span, quality, and value of assets created. It is thus important to investigate the issues of sustainability in relation to the impact on the lives of people as to suggest policy and strategy changes that should underpin future community development initiatives.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The point of departure of the study was the RDP, which according to the African National Congress (ANC, 1994:1) is “an integrated, coherent socio-economic policy framework”. It sought to prove the hypothesis that the Community Based Public Works Programme (CBPWP), as one of the strategies through which the RDP was operationalised, did not lead to sustainable results. A discussion on CBPWP as a strategy for development is followed by a review of CBPWP projects in Groutville, as a case study. First, key concepts on which the research revolves and which are considered to be the building blocks of the independent variables (i.e. RDP, NPWP and CBPWP) are briefly defined below.

2.2 Clarification of Concepts

2.2.1 Public Works Programme and the Community Based Public Works Programme

The question that the study sought to answer was whether the Public Works and Community Based Public Works Programme lead to sustainable results. In dealing with the issue, the definition of a Community Based Public Works Programme (CBPWP) adopted by the researcher is provided by the Department of Public Works (1997:8), namely,

.... it (CBPWP) is ‘aimed at poverty alleviation through job creation, skills training, delivery of needed assets, and capacity building’.

The CBPWP is defined in terms of what it seeks to achieve and the study seek to prove that these results cannot be sustained. Thus, the operative concept in the summative exercise carried was ‘sustainability’.

2.2.2 Sustainability

One of the most commonly used definitions of sustainable development is that it is “development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs” (Brundtland, 1987:43; Atkinson & Urquhart, 2000: 16-17 and Cole, 1994:228). This definition, according to Atkinson & Urquhart, (2000:16) “emphasizes adopting a long-term approach towards improving the quality of life of people now and in the future”. It implies that development must be self-sustaining, continuous and protect the environment. The view that the study adopted was that, in line with this definition, the CBPWP is an effort to use ‘resources in a coherent and purposeful manner that can be sustained into the future’ (ANC, 1994:4-5). As an RDP strategy the CBPWP in Groutville sought to bring about community development.

2.2.3 The concept of development

Community participation in development, if it is to be relevant, is important. As Cole (1994:7), puts it, “If people are to participate in helping to determine development paths it is essential that their own analyses of their conditions, needs and constraints are voiced and heard”. The concept ‘community’ is not seen as a heterogeneous grouping of people sharing a geographic area, resources, wants and problems and a common purpose or vision to better their lives (Ferrinho, 1980:5; Burkey, 1993:40 and Thornton & Ramphela, 1988:31-38). The approach that is adopted in this study is based on the conceptualization of a community as a group of people that is “subject to internal divisions, which include, inter alia, religious, cultural, class and gender divisions” (Chambers, 1997:183). In the case of Groutville, the most prominent form of division that defines the community was political polarization. As Chambers (1997:3) puts it, “for success, development must not only be innovative and research-based, but locally conceived and initiated, flexible, participatory and based on a clear understanding of local economics and politics...”

2.2.4 The concept of participation

The meaning of development as a people-driven phenomenon implies the role of participation as a ‘moderator variable’ (Bless & Higson - Smith, 1995:32) in development. What then is ‘participation’? According to Burkey (1993:56) “participation is a learning by

doing exercise and requires direct access to resources needed for development, active involvement and influence in the decisions affecting those resources”. This definition implies that poor people have capabilities and knowledge and external people should come in as facilitators of development and change that is required (Chambers, 1997:131-132 and Burkey, 1993:73-78). In the Groutville study the issue of participation was analyzed and different perceptions emerged between the Government as a change agent and the beneficiaries of the projects, the community (see Tables 2(a) – (d)). In evaluating the success of the CBPWP, emphasis is put on participation, primarily as defined here.

2.2.5 CBPWP as a model for community development

Unemployment and poverty is disempowering and make poor people unable to meet their basic needs (Burkey, 1993:3-6). Solutions required do not only lie in stimulating economic growth but more so community development (ANC, 1994:17-19). Todaro (1991:87) defines economic development in terms of reduction, and elimination of poverty, inequality and unemployment within the context of a growing economy. The approach in dealing with unemployment and poverty adopted by Government was to build “an economy which offers all South Africans the opportunity to contribute productively” and create jobs particularly for women and youth (ANC, 1994:18 and Bond & Khosa, 1999:5-7). The public works programme and the CBPWP was thus structured as a model to achieve this objective. As a job creation model, the CBPWP focused on creating community assets, education and training opportunities, community empowerment and maintenance of public buildings (Bond & Khosa, 1999:6; ANC, 1994:18-19 and Department of Public Works, White Paper, 1997). Therefore, the projects that were done in Groutville, which included additional classrooms, a crèche and a community center, fell within the scope of CBPWP as a job creation model that linked meeting basic needs and community development.

2.3 The Public Works Programme as a framework for sustainable development

2.3.1 Introduction

The CBPWP was introduced to encourage the creation and expansion of additional capacity for poverty alleviation and community development. It is a component of the National Public Works Programme (NPWP). The other component of the NPWP is the reorientation of the construction sector (Radebe, 1999:23). The operational model of the

CBPWP integrates existing community and private sector capacity, build partnerships between communities, non-governmental organizations, local government and other delivery entities (Radebe, 1999:21). In line with this model, the CBPWP in Groutville had national Government, local Government, and private sector organizations as stakeholders together with the community. In general the main thrust is to provide relief programmes, poverty alleviation, infrastructure provision, skills development and job creation in an integrated and sustainable manner. The aim of this study was to test the performance of the CBPWP in Groutville in relation to some of these deliverables. In order to contextualize the Groutville case study, an overview of the CBPWP as a framework for sustainable development, is necessary.

2.3.2 Objectives of the CBPWP

The CBPWP of the National Public Works Programme (NPWP) was fashioned as the implementation plan of the RDP in terms of job creation through infrastructure provision, repair or maintenance (Department of Public Works, 1998:11-16). It was described as a special measure to create jobs through linking the building of the economy and meeting basic needs by redressing infrastructure disparities of the past (ANC, 1994:18).

Apart from job creation, the ANC (1994) and the RDP White Paper (1994) identify the following as key strategic objectives of Public Works:

- education and training so that people are empowered to participate in their own development;
- optimal involvement of women and youth in the poorest of the poor households and to target women-headed households;
- create a link to and coordinate with other job creation and labour intensive construction initiatives (ANC, 1994; RDP White Paper, 1995 and Department of Public Works, 1998).

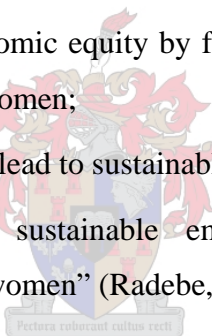
The challenge faced by Government is to grow the economy, ensure equitable distribution of wealth and broaden participation in the economy of the country (Department of Finance, 1997 and Department of Public Works, 1997:3). The economy should grow and generate higher levels of employment and equity. Public Works have attempted to play a big role in realizing this mandate not only through job-creation but through managing public assets, investing in economic infrastructure, electrification, water provision and road construction

(Department of Public Works, 1997 White Paper: Public Works Towards the 21st Century, section 1.1).

2.3.3 Empowerment of women

Public Works were seen as a strategy to create assets that contribute to the alleviation of poverty. Its primary target group is women so that they are empowered to participate meaningfully in the economic sphere (Department of Public Works, 1998). In a report to the Parliamentary Committee on the Improvement of the Quality of Life and Status of Women, the Minister of Public Works, Mr. Jeff Radebe (1998) asserts, “through the National Public Works Programme, a significant contribution towards improving the status of women is being made”. Specifically, the Community Based Public Works Programme sets out to:

- “contribute towards sustainable poverty alleviation in the rural areas through integrated rural development;
- enhance social and economic equity by focusing on human development, with particular emphasis on women;
- create needed assets that lead to sustainable income generation and
- improve and increase sustainable employment and income generation opportunities to benefit women” (Radebe, 1999).



Throughout the official correspondence and reports on Public Works, a common thread is a commitment to poverty alleviation, job creation and empowerment of women. In 1997 the CBPWP was subjected to an extensive evaluation to assess performance on the basis of these policy undertakings and objectives. The ILO evaluation described the South African Public Works Programme as the best ever seen in any of the developing countries in Asia, Latin America and Africa (ILO Report, 1996). It found that it did well in regard to “targeting” (see Everatt, 1997) in that “42% of the beneficiaries were women” (Department of Public Works, 1998).

It is significant that the South African Government was applauded by the ILO for the success of Public Works in providing employment opportunities to women (ILO Report, 1996). According to the 1995 Household Survey (see May, 2000), about 47% of African women are likely to be unemployed. The extent of unemployment also varies by province in addition to gender. Unemployment is highest in rural areas. KwaZulu-Natal, with one

of the largest numbers of people living in rural areas, had a 43% unemployment rate (White Paper, 1997 Public Works: Toward the 21st Century). The figures below are based on information from the October Household Survey (Republic of South Africa, 1995: Central Statistical Services) and the Department of Public Works, 1997 Public Works: White Paper Towards the 21st Century,).

Table 1 (a) Unemployment by race and gender (Source, 1995, October Household Survey)

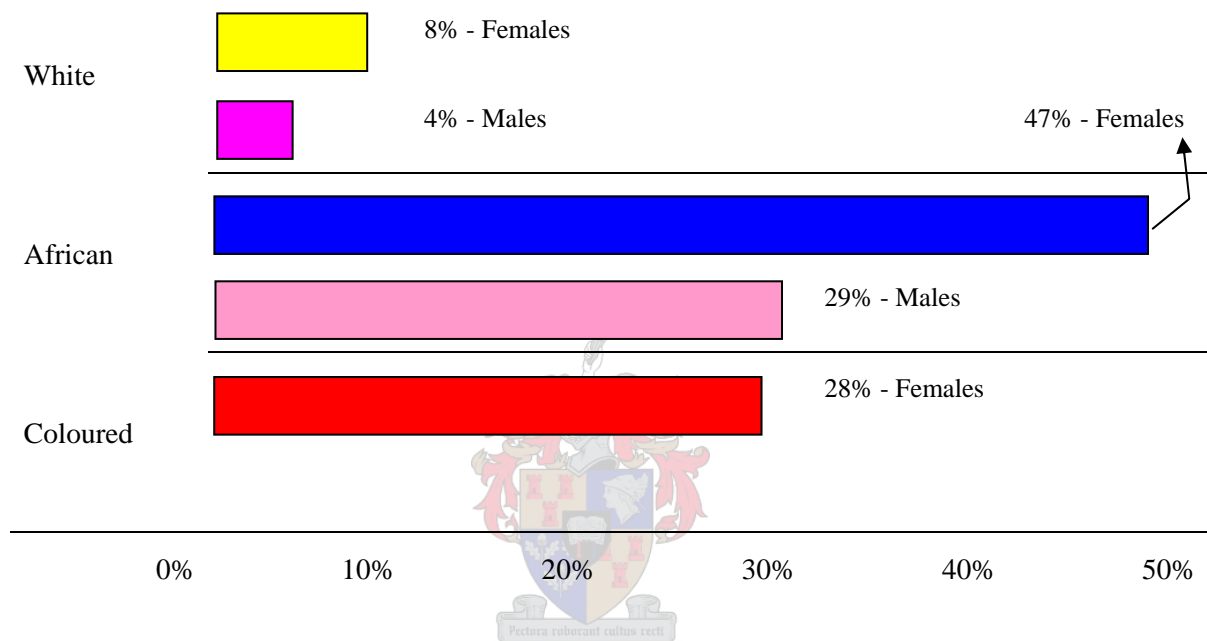
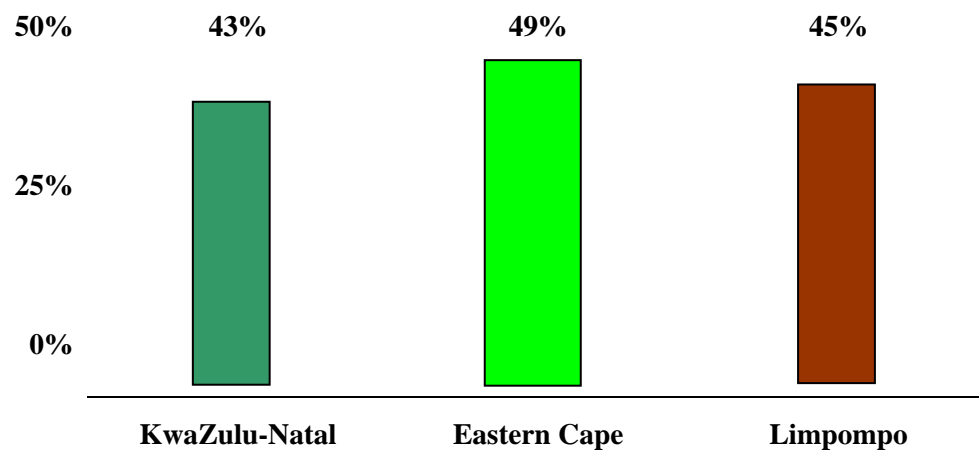


Table 1 (b) Unemployment in the poorest provinces (Source, 1995, October Household Survey)



In Groutville, the Clean and Green Campaign was potentially well-gearred to employ women and make them income-earners. This was because this project did not require sophisticated technical skills, which women generally do not have, and was less physically demanding. The CBPWP projects, like the ones implemented in Groutville, are for these reasons (level of technical skills required and the physical nature of work) “generally biased towards men” (Department of Public Works, 1997). As the case study showed, the majority of women in the Groutville projects were mainly involved in making tea and carrying water for men. Areas where women could play a pivotal role might include administrative work, budget control, planning and general management especially with regard to monitoring the outcomes of the projects. Unfortunately these tasks might require project management and computer literacy skills. The majority of rural women do not possess any of these skills. It is usually not possible to first equip women with these skills before a project is implemented, as in most cases there are tight timeframes for completion of projects. Given these realities, the CBPWP will always face an insurmountable challenge in terms of empowerment of women in a sustainable manner.

2.3.4 CBPWP and sustainability

With regard to sustainability the South African Government (ILO Report, 1996) identified the need to refocus the programme on infrastructure creation that would “directly and

indirectly lead to sustainable income generation and therefore sustainable poverty alleviation” (Department of Public Works, 1998:11-16). This gave birth to what the Department of Public Works dubbed, “the Realigned Community Based Public Works Programme”.

Four key categories of assets that would achieve these objectives were identified and became a cornerstone of the realigned Public Works Programme (Department of Public Works, 1997:2-4). The first category included:

- Local market
- Storage facilities
- Link and access roads.

This approach and type of assets integrates agricultural activities with the building or upgrading of access roads to improve access to markets. A number of such markets were built by the Department of Public Works in Eshowe together with upgrading of the main road and the construction of the N2 toll road in 1996–97. This has improved the flow of traffic and increased the number of passers by, visitors or tourists thus boosting sales and profit margins.

The second category included “directly productive assets such as irrigation schemes, livestock dips and woodlots” (Department of Public Works, 1997:2-4). These also targeted women and were time-saving and thus reduced the burden on women, who have to grapple with household chores and at the same time fetch wood from afar, ensure that livestock is taken to far away dipping ponds and manually irrigate crops. The net effect of these assets is more time for women to participate in other income generating activities and lighten the physical stress associated with wood collecting and the like (see May, Rogerson & Vaughan, in May (ed), 2000).

Another category of assets in the Realigned Community Based Public Works Programme is what the Department of Public Works (op. cit, 1997) referred to as “labour saving assets”. These include crèches, like the one which is a subject of the Groutville study, potable water and sanitation. The community of Groutville, according to the focus group, did not get piped water although they (women) cited it as a top priority.

The fourth category includes “community-multi-purpose centers, community halls and sports facilities” (see Department of Public Works, 1998, The Realigned CBPWP and the Implementation of the New Approach). The strategic objective is to achieve social

cohesion and minimize the impact of violence and conflict. Various reports on violence in KwaZulu-Natal have consistently linked it to lack of access to resources and to economic opportunities. Thus the interventions of Public Works do not only help alleviate poverty but increases prospects for peaceful co-existence (see ANC, 1994:11, and RDP White Paper, 1994:6-7). This means that there is a causal relationship (Bless & Higson - Smith, 1995:30) between poverty and violence.

Treurnicht (in Kotze (ed), 1997:86-87) argues that developmental projects should also strive to break the cycle of sustained poverty and sustained exploitation of natural resources. The establishment of a sports-facility for instance ensures that the youth do not play in areas that may disturb the ecosystem. In deep rural areas boys tend to create soccer fields in any unoccupied piece of flat land, swim in natural dams or lakes which upsets the ecosystem. Similarly the creation of woodlots also ensures that rural women do not expose endangered plant species to continuous exploitation.

2.3.5 An integrated approach

An integrated approach to development and poverty relief interventions is the bedrock of Government policy and strategies (RSA, 2000, The Presidency, Integrated Rural Development Strategy; and ANC, 1994:13). At a structural and institutional level, coordination among the three spheres of Government and private-public sector partnerships ensures that more resources are amassed for development. The integration of different sectors, such as human resources, infrastructure provision and the rural-urban sector promotes a holistic approach to development. Operationally this means the provision of jobs, training, infrastructure and rural and urban economic development as elements of a development programme. This approach forms the bedrock of the World Bank's "Comprehensive Development Framework (CDF)", the CBPWP and the Government's Integrated Rural Development Strategy (IRDS). The World Bank has been evolving the Comprehensive Development Framework (CDF) in an attempt to operationalise a holistic approach to development. The features of the CDF are the involvement of Governments, NGOs, and other agencies to co-ordinate efforts to combat constraints on development (RSA, The Presidency, 2000:20; and World Bank, 2000:21).

The scope, elements and components of integration at an institutional level are features of the NPWP. The CBPWP in Groutville was co-ordinated among central Government, the provincial Government, local Government and private sector institutions, namely SASA

and the SAB. However, a point is made throughout the study, that there was no integration at project level in Groutville. As such, holistic and sustainable outcomes could not be attained. This was the case in other areas where the CBPWP was implemented, like Eshowe where market stalls were integrated with upgrading of main and access roads. As this study shows, the same cannot be said about the Groutville projects. Whilst a community center was built, it was not integrated with provision of other income generating assets or time and labour saving assets such as piped water. Additional classrooms that were built were also not coupled with the provision of any teaching and learning aids. This disintegrated approach is a primary cause for the ineffectiveness of the CBPWP in Groutville in relation to lasting and visible socio-economic impact.

The key strategic objectives of Public Works, as defined above, emphasize a developmental and integrated approach to poverty alleviation. It links assets or infrastructure with the objective of job creation and education and training for empowerment. Community empowerment was an important RDP objective. In the Groutville study, a quantitative indicator such as the number of people employed and the extent of participation at all stages of the projects served as indicators of community empowerment (Chambers, 1997:206; Bond & Khosa, 1999:4 and De Beer & Swanepoel, 1998:23). Education and training as integral elements of the CBPWP should enhance empowerment and self-reliance (see Burkey, 1993:40-68).

Thus poverty alleviation is not seen as an end in itself. The CBPWP is meant to build self-reliance as opposed to being handouts that should lead to dependency (see Budlender in May (ed), 2000, and Burkey, 1993:40-68). In the Groutville case, it is accepted that poverty and unemployment are “correlated variables” to the condition of underdevelopment (Bless & Higson - Smith, 1995:30). This situation could not be meaningfully addressed through uncoordinated and piecemeal strategies. According to the IRDS (RSA, The Presidency, 2000:19), an integrated approach to development is “much broader than poverty alleviation through social grants and transfers”.

2.3.6 Job creation and training

The Department of Public Works (White Paper, 1997) sought to achieve job creation objectives through two strategic approaches. The first was through usage of labour intensive construction methods and the second, was community-based public works. Labour intensity meant integrating modern technology with manual labour and skills

transfer. The type of projects chosen in Groutville, namely construction of classrooms, a crèche and the Clean and Green Campaign were compatible with the labour intensity approach. Skills transfer has proven to be difficult to implement in a sustainable manner. The Department of Public Works found it hard to meet the objective of delivering the required assets quickly whilst at the same time adequately training workers on the project. The life span of many public works projects does not lend themselves to training and capacity building (RSA, Department of Public Works, 1997). This reality could be regarded as one of the principal factors that influenced the performance of the CBPWP in Groutville in relation to capacity building.

The duration of CBPWP projects, in addition to being unsuited for sustained training and capacity building, means that they cannot by themselves provide long-term employment. In the Groutville case, employment opportunities were mainly created during the construction phase. In other words the CBPWP projects provide short-term relief for the unemployed without any further opportunities. This reality weakens the strength of public works as a strategy for sustainable development. This is the reason why it is important to emphasize training and capacity building and the promotion of small, micro and medium enterprises (SMMEs) as an integral part of CBPWP. In addition to this, Government decided to include commitment to skills transfer as a pre-condition for the awarding of contracts. A contractor is also expected to explore, together with Government, creative ways of employment opportunities beyond the CBPWP, “including possible career pathing in the construction industry” (RSA, Department of Public Works, 1997). It would appear, however, that this was not enforced in the Groutville case and no adequate monitoring mechanisms were put in place to trace skills transfer and career pathing.

It is reassuring to note that the Department of Public Works made a commitment in its White Paper (1997:17) to address the “extension of employment opportunities” through the CBPWP. It sought to do this by revisiting the type of assets created through CBPWP and by putting emphasis on productive assets such as market stalls. This was done in later CBPWP projects outside Eshowe where the upgrading of the highway took place alongside the construction of fresh produce market stalls. This meant that communities were employed during the construction of the stalls and some of them continued to generate income through ownership of the stalls after completion. This approach meant that CBPWP projects were also linked to a bigger capital and labour intensive project, the upgrading of the highway.

2.3.7 Conclusion

Public Works is at the center of Government's "socio-economic strategies" (RSA, Department of Public Works, 1996:2). The creation of assets in a way that creates jobs, results in skills development and promotes broader participation in economic activities and integrates economic growth with development (Seers in Todaro, 1991:86-87). In line with the principles of the RDP, Public Works sought to put people at the center of development and bring about integrated and sustainable development (ANC, 1994:11). These are the goals and socio-economic realities (poverty, unemployment, violence, etc) that informed the decision to implement CBPWP in Groutville.

It was the gravity of poverty and unemployment, which influenced the decision of Government to intervene through the CBPWP. Local people were employed during the construction of the facilities (Mhlongo, February 2001; and RSA, Department of Public Works, 1996:2-3). However, the nature of the project could not lead to sustained employment, nor was there evidence of a link between skills learnt, in areas such as bricklaying and institutional support for people to use such skills elsewhere or in their own enterprises. There seem to have been no direct link between the projects and continued employment as well as education and training (ANC, 1994:11-12; see RDP White Paper, 1995; and White Paper 1996, Public Works Towards the 21st Century, section 1.1).

Both the 1997 White Paper of the Department of Public Works and the 1999–2000 Annual Report contain indicators of a fundamental review of the CBPWP. The White Paper (1997) acknowledges the inherent weaknesses of the initial CBPWP in relation to sustainability of employment opportunities, and other problems such as poor maintenance of completed projects. In the 1999–2000 Annual Report (RSA, Department of Public Works, 2000), a significant policy change seems to have taken place. More emphasis is on integrating the CBPWP projects with other development programmes of Government such as the various spatial development initiatives and the Integrated Rural Development Strategy. In the words of the Minister of Public Works, Ms. Stella Sigcau, "the next five years will see the accelerated delivery of CBPWP in targeted communities. Cost effective and sustainable, the new strategies will catapult CBPWP to the centre of rural development in South Africa" (RSA, Department of Public Works, 2000).

2.4 Poverty as a challenge to sustainable development

2.4.1 Introduction

Poverty, whilst it is an indicator of underdevelopment, can be an impediment to people centered development. It results in low self-esteem and diminishes self-reliance, one's sense of worth and the ability to influence the type and extent of development intervention (Burkey, 1993:204-205; Kotze (ed). 1997:38–39, and Todaro, 1991:88-89). Thus the “capability to do it”, that is to participate in the development process, may be compromised (Chambers, 1997:131). It is perhaps the extent of destitution and poverty that account for poor participation of people in development interventions of the likes of Groutville. The desire for jobs may have caused the people of Groutville not to be able to choose the nature and extent of the intervention. Otherwise they could well have chosen more labour intensive, self-sustaining income generating projects (Mabogumje in Fair, 1982:24, and Burkey, 1993:207). It is thus necessary to analyze the phenomenon “poverty” and the challenge that it poses to sustainable development.

2.4.2 Defining poverty

Seers (in Todaro, 1991:87) raises pertinent questions on development in relation to poverty. “What has been happening to poverty? What has been happening to unemployment? What has been happening to inequality?” If indeed these have declined, then there would have been a better life for all”. Since the Groutville projects were intended to deal with poverty and development, this operational delineation of the idea of development informs an assessment of the impact of CBPWP in Groutville (Bless & Higson - Smith, 1995:36).

Poverty is generally defined in development literature as the inability of individuals, households, or entire communities, to command sufficient resources to satisfy a socially acceptable minimum standard of living. Other characteristics of poverty are – “alienation from the community... food insecurity... crowded homes...usage of basic forms of energy...lack of adequately paid, secure jobs... and fragmentation of family” (May (ed), 1998:3-4). Singh & Titi (1995:9-11) agree. They define it (poverty) as “a condition of lack of access to options and entitlements which are social, political, economic, cultural and environmental”.

May (1998:2-3) identifies three basic concepts that clarify the extent, nature and persistence of poverty:

- “Sufficiency – having or not having enough food, income and essential services;
- Access – being able or unable to actually acquire sufficient food, income, services and so on; and
- Security – having or not having secure and sustainable access to essential commodities, services and other conditions for an acceptable life....”

Poverty is seen in terms of the inadequacies in basic essentials of life. Some of these are income, food, shelter and access to important services such as health care, clean water and energy. According to the Department of Public Works (White Paper, 1997, Public Works Towards the 21st Century) the extent of poverty and the challenges it poses is shown by lack of access to basic infrastructure.

“.... only 30% of African households have access to electricity for cooking, heating or lighting, while nearly all Coloured, Indian and White households have access to electricity. ... Only 27% of African households have running tap water inside their residences, only 34% have access to flush toilets, and only 37 % have their refuse removed by a local authority” (Department of Public Works, 1997).

Experiences of poverty do not only mean empty stomachs, diseases and homelessness. It is potentially more devastating in so far as it leads to denigration and hopelessness. A low sense of self-worth, lack of access to knowledge or education, results in people who are dependent on others for help (May, 1998:2-4, and Todaro, 1991:88-89). Burkey (1993:12-25), distinguishes between causes and symptoms of poverty and between primary and secondary causes of poverty. Burkey (1993:12-14), refers to the interplay between causes and symptoms in what becomes a vicious circle of poverty. In the case of Groutville, poor education facilities and inadequate health facilities are caused by insufficient allocation of funds by Government which in turn leads to other symptoms of poverty such as prevalence of diseases, hunger and illiteracy.

2.4.3 Development or change agents

In the situation explained above, Government and other agents, confronted with the ugly reality of homelessness and foodless families, tend to implement poverty relief programmes. They implement or intervene in a way that does not introduce a “process of change, awareness building and encourage local initiative” (Burkey, 1993:76 and Kellerman & Kotze in Kotze ed. 1997:41). According to the Constitution of the Republic

of South Africa, (Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996), local Government is an agent of change that should “promote social and economic development”. The Municipal Systems Act, (Republic of South Africa, Municipal Systems Act, Act No 32 of 2000) also requires of local Government to create mechanisms, processes and procedures to promote community participation in development. Government is required by law to act as a change agent that facilitates development through participation and empowerment as opposed to doing things for people (De Beer & Swanepoel, 1998:22-23). Development agents, which include Government, should avoid handouts and the tendency of “doing things for people, rather than helping people to do things for themselves” (Burkey, 1993:83). The danger of “hand-outs” is that they deepen dependency and thwart meaningful development.

This dependency syndrome is illustrated by May (1998) where she quotes a song from the Limpopo Province community during a workshop on Experiences and Perceptions of Poverty in South Africa. “The Voice of the Poor. They are here, yes we agree, here they are, our visitors are sent by the World Bank, yes here they are, they are here to help us and develop us. And we hope they won’t forget us”.

However, Fegulson (in Burkey, 1993:52) puts the issue in perspective in terms of a people-centered approach to development when he says, “No one should decide in advance what the village community needs to know. Ask the people, very often they know what they need to know”. The condition of abject poverty brings with it low self-esteem, and a culture of dependency, which does not augur well for development. However, even in conditions of poverty, people still know what they need and they should therefore be participants in the making of choices and in determining their priorities. This approach introduces the idea of “self-reliance” (Chambers, 1997:131 and Burkey, 1993:211) and is a basic tenant of the philosophy of people-centered development (see ANC, 1994, and RDP White Paper, 1994).

2.4.4 The notion of self-reliance

According to Burkey (1993:50), self-reliance is doing things for one’s self, either as an individual or as part of a collective. This definition (of self-reliance) presupposes a sense of self-confidence, and believing in oneself and being independent. There is however a link between self-reliance and poverty. Self-reliance requires skills and knowledge, which may be acquired through formal education and training, and poor people often cannot afford to go to school. Poverty has a dehumanizing effect on people and often leads to low

self-esteem, which in turn does not engender self-reliance. Change agents are therefore required to help people to do things for themselves. They should facilitate development and self-reliance.

A state of low self-esteem caused by poverty should not be taken to mean that a person is completely disabled to a point of not knowing his or her priorities. Government and development agents have often built latrines whereas people wanted something else, for example, piped water. But then what is self-reliance in the context of development? Chambers (1997:131) says that even the poor have “capabilities: they can do it”. Thus the knowledge, experiences of their social and economic environment and the means of survival that they have relied upon, form an important part of the role of the poor in any development initiative. Certain things have to happen before we can say the poor can, on the basis of the principle of self-reliance alone, begin to do things for themselves in the context of development. One such prerequisite is training. It (training) should provide basic skills that are necessary to plan, organize or mobilize local resources to kick-start certain projects.

Unfortunately poverty often means the inability to pay for (formal) education and training. It thus increases a pool of illiterate people and unskilled potential workforce. Often being uneducated means that one is inhibited from accessing the benefits of new information, knowledge and technology. It thus reduces the capacity of the poor to start initiatives that would free them from the chains of poverty. This situation challenges Government and other actors to consciously avoid handouts and emphasize those intervention strategies that do not only provide relief from poverty but also build capacity among the poor to do things for themselves. As Burkey (1993:221) puts it in the context of participatory development, “do not do anything for people that they can do for themselves”. Burkey’s (1993) golden rule challenges us to see the poor not as helpless people but rather as potential assets in the course of development. It also means we need to promote the philosophy of “self-reliant participatory development”, i.e. the people-centered approach to development.

People-centered development is intertwined with the process of human development. The RDP as a proponent of people-centered development places emphasis on education and training, skills development and empowerment (ANC, 1994:14-58). Human development is an important requisite for self-reliance, self-respect and self-confidence especially among the poor as it enables them to drive and influence the development agenda. This, according to Burkey (1993:35-36) takes place through working with others, sharing

knowledge and skills and becoming aware of one's shortcomings and potential and taking part in all spheres of the development of one's community. People are empowered or have no barriers to claim their rightful place in the struggle for development or eradication of poverty.

The eradication of poverty is an indicator of the state of development (Todaro, 1991:87). Does this mean that poverty must first be eradicated before significant strides to development can be achieved? What should happen first? Poverty is one of the reasons there has to be development initiatives. It is one critical variable in the phenomenon development.

2.4.5 Indigenous knowledge as a resource for development

The concepts of indigenous knowledge systems (IKS) and participatory rural appraisal (PRA) or participatory learning and action (PLA) have added new meaning to the development debate (see Chambers, 1997; May 2000 and Treurnicht in Kotze ed., 1997:93). These concepts recognize the importance of participation, knowledge of local peoples' own realities, needs and aspirations that should define any development programme. IKS and PRA ensure that research processes, policies and development projects are relevant and meet the needs of the poor. According to Treurnicht (in Kotze ed. 1997:93-102), IKS and PRA recognize that development programmes must be "more participatory and more oriented towards grassroots action and empowerment". This is related to and reinforces the notion of self-reliance and the need for development agencies to rethink their approaches to poverty alleviation and development. In the context of the CBPWP, especially when it (CBPWP) is implemented in rural, poor communities, it (IKS) could promote sustainability of results.

Poor people's indigenous technical knowledge, their understanding of their basic needs and priorities, should be mobilized as part of a pool of resources to initiate, direct and sustain their own development (Fair, 1982:24). Poor people need to, and can, be involved and take the lead in the process of identifying opportunities and projects that might lead to the creation of assets and sustainable or permanent jobs (Republic of South Africa 1997, Department of Public Works, Annual Report). A poverty alleviation and development programme would be sustainable if it contributes to local growth, local people care about its success and are able to access the resources to keep it going. According to the Republic of South Africa (The Presidency, IRDS 2000:19), sustainability implies "effective

participation to assure that the projects and activities undertaken respond to articulated priorities at the local level”.

Some authors argue that culture forms an important part of indigenous knowledge system and should occupy a pivotal role in development (Verhelst, 1990 & Aina, 1989 cited in Kotze. ed, 1997:93-94). Culture is seen as the sum total of the original solutions that enables communities to adapt to the natural and social environment. It denotes not only values but also a body of knowledge, techniques, ideals and aspirations specific to a society. This means that the poor, as Burkey (1993:221) asserts, know what they want and should therefore lead the process of project selection and making of choices in the context of development programmes (see South Africa, Republic, ILO Report, 1996:59, and Kellerman & Kotze in Kotze ed. 1997:41) Community participation is the single most important challenge faced by development. The community participation ideal is stated in the RDP (1994), Municipal Systems Act, (2000) and the White Paper on Local Government (1998).

2.4.6 The socio-political context of poverty and development challenges in South Africa

Although poverty is not necessarily unique to South Africa, it is a well-documented reality with certain characteristics that are uniquely South African. This has to do with the country's past political processes and policies. South Africa is an upper-middle-income country with a per capita income similar to that of Botswana, Brazil, Malaysia or Mauritius (May, 2000:2). Some development agencies refer to South Africa as a combination of a “First and Third World country”. This resulted from institutionalized discrimination (May, 2000:2) and skewed distribution of wealth by various successive minority governments.

According to Rodwell & Cockayne (2001:7-9), Jay Naidoo, the Minister in charge of the RDP at the time, was quoted in the Star Newspaper in 1996 as having said that 75% of the South African population lived in Third World conditions. “The White 12% of South Africa's population enjoyed a standard of living equal to that of Canadians. In terms of income distribution, land distribution and water distribution, South Africa was one of the most unequal societies in the world” (Lipton et al, 1996, cited in Rodwell & Cockayne, 2001:8). According to the RDP Office (1995), “53% of the South Africa's population were classified as poor” and broken down by race, 65% of all Africans were poor. Poverty is

more extreme in rural areas, especially in the former homelands. It is generally accepted that the poorest provinces in the country are Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo.

Lack of access to basic services such as health, education and the inability to satisfy basic needs stem, among others, from institutionalized discrimination, and social, economic and political engineering (ANC, 1994:1-3). Various acts such as the Land Act of 1913, the Job Reservation Act of 1926, the Bantu Education Act of 1952, and the Influx Control Act of 1926, entrenched poverty and marginalization of the majority of the population. These Acts, together with other oppressive measures, blocked access to productive land, education, and certain types of jobs and limited freedom of movement. The majority of people were thus condemned to a state of haplessness, poverty and ignorance, which made prospects of self-development minimal.

The loss of land through the 1913 Land Act meant loss of assets such as livestock and limited tilling of land either for subsistence farming or commercial farming (Luthuli, 1962:27). It was not only loss of land that condemned people to poverty but lack of access to markets, credit, infrastructure and education meant that people could not develop themselves (May, 2000:2 and Luthuli, 1962:27). Nor could they use meager resources to craft a decent living. Education alone could empower the poor, enable them to have access to information and increase the ability to use resources such as land, the market and credit. There has to be a regulatory framework that includes tools such as affirmative action and a regime that encourages financial institutions to invest in previously disadvantaged people.

Inequality and lack of education are also factors that cannot be ignored in a discourse about poverty. Randall (in Cole ed., 1994:164) points out that in 1991, 64.4% of the Black population were functionally illiterate. According to Chisholm (cited by Randall in Cole (ed), 1994:64), “the highest number of illiterate” is among the “Bantu Education generation”. The presence of race as a factor in the provision of, or access to, education is illustrated by the shortage of engineers among Blacks (only 3.8%), scientist (10.9%) and accountants (11.8%). This explains why Blacks dominate the “pool of unskilled labour” in the country.

There is also a relationship between unemployment on the one hand and poverty and inequality on the other. Unemployment increases lack of access to food and thus contributes to malnutrition and disease. The social and political inequality that was

engendered by the Apartheid regime resulted in high rates of unemployment among Blacks, Coloureds and Indians. There was, and continues to be a corresponding level of malnutrition and disease. According to a study conducted by the National Institute for Economic Policy (City Press Business, 28 January 2001), “about 14 million South Africans are vulnerable to food insecurity”. The majority of these are Africans. This is due to a high unemployment rate and low wages and “inadequate food security” (op.cit). Unemployment, inequality and low wages shape and influence poverty trends in South Africa.

Interventions that target the poor as well as a social security system are as indispensable as ever. The introduction of the school-feeding scheme in African primary schools was a realization of the extent of poverty and the impact it has on learning and productivity among pupils. The fact that this scheme was only introduced in African areas and in rural communities is an indication that African and rural communities are the most poverty stricken and vulnerable to food insecurity. The success of the scheme, in the Eastern Cape Province in particular, has been minimal due to corruption, abuse of the system and maladministration. It only “benefited between 80% and 89% since 1994 and only 70% of the budget for feeding scheme programme was spent in the 1998/99 financial year”(City Press, Business, 28 January 2001).

Income inequality is another social reality in South Africa that places severe strain on the country’s resources and skills development. Between 1975 and 1991, the income of the poorest 60% of the population dropped by 35%. The poorest quintile received 1.5 % of the total income, compared to the 65% received by the richest 10% (RSA, Departments of Education and of Labour, 2001:18-19). By 1996, the gulf between the rich and poor had grown even larger. The SACP (7 April 2000) contends that the majority of the population is now deeper in poverty than before. Almost 53% of the South African population falls within the category of the poor and 29% in the category of “ultra-poor”.

The extreme income inequality limits the ability of individuals, households and Government to finance education and training for skills development, which is a prerequisite for participation in the fight against the scourge of poverty and disease. Education is also a catalyst for improved participation in the labour market and for better productivity and therefore income growth and development. Highly skewed income inequality reduces spending capacity and therefore a lower demand for goods and services, thereby perpetuating a stagnant economy and uneven development.

Low economic growth and inflation affects people differently in a way that reflects disparities in incomes. Due to South Africa's economic and political history characterized by inequality and exclusion, the impact of poor economic performance is felt differently along racial lines. This can be through loss of jobs, reduction in income or even difficulty in finding jobs after graduating from tertiary institutions. As Bhorat, Leibbrandt & Woolard in Elbadawi & Hartzenberg (eds) (2000:14-15) point out, a slump in the economy between 1970 and the early 1990's was borne unevenly between White and Black sections of the population. Given this history, any development programme in South Africa must result in the narrowing of inequality and the broadening of participation in the economy.

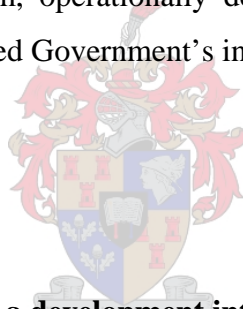
2.4.7 Conclusion

Any Government intervention to combat poverty and inequality, such as the Public Works Programme, needs to be assessed against the backdrop of the vicious cycle of inequality, poverty and underdevelopment (see Burkey, 1993:11-15 and Chambers, 1997:162 –163). Todaro (1991:244) makes a case for linkages among unemployment, poverty, and income distribution. Todaro (1991:244) goes on to say that, "it would be wrong to assume that everyone who does not have a job is necessarily poor or that all those who work full-time are relatively well off. Many individuals may work full-time in terms of hours per day but may nevertheless earn very little income. Many self-employed workers may be so classified. Such people are by definition fully employed, but often they are very poor". Those who are unemployed or low-income earners are exposed to poverty and lack of access to social and health amenities. For example, failure to access quality education reduces chances of employment, which in turn breeds inequality and poverty (see Bhorat, Leibbrandt & Woolard in Elbadawi & Hartzenberg (eds.), 2000:15). The Public Works Programme has since 1994 become a useful strategy to redress poverty and inequality through focus on employment creation. It also has a legacy, which needed to be acknowledged, reflected upon, and lessons drawn from it.

The legacy of Public Works Programmes inherited from the previous regime was not encouraging. The Special Employment Creation Programme (SECP) in 1983 failed to create socially useful assets (see South Africa Republic, 1997, White Paper: Public Works Towards the 21st Century). It also failed to recognize the importance of empowerment, decent wages and was used as a political tool to silence opposition. It therefore did not do much in addressing unequal distribution of, and access to infrastructure. The post-1994 Public Works Programme has had to correct the impact of the skewed application of the

SECP and became a strategic tool for socio-economic development. There is renewed emphasis on integrating poverty alleviation with other development initiatives in the realigned Community Based Public Works Projects (CBPWP) as discussed above.

The challenges facing Government in relation to improving the quality of life of the people is daunting. The levels of poverty, lack of skills, inequality and other social ills place demands on the country's resources. A new paradigm was required to pursue a development agenda that prioritize empowerment as opposed to handouts. Thus, the thrust of the Public Works Programme is to place people at the center of all development initiatives. The construction of infrastructure is integrated with the objectives of socio-economic growth and development. Employment and training should be seen as essential ingredients in any poverty-focused development strategy. Training is important for capacity building so that beneficiaries of a poverty relief programme acquire skills that enable them to access employment opportunities beyond the life span of a poverty-relief programme. It was this paradigm, operationally defined through the Realigned Public Works Programme, which informed Government's intervention in Groutville.



2.5 Groutville: The need for a development intervention

2.5.1 Introduction

The researcher chose Groutville as a case study to test the effectiveness of Government's intervention through the CBPWP. As a start, a social-historical profile of the area is given. This is followed by an overview of economic issues, namely, the extent of unemployment, the collapse of the local farming industry and the phenomenon of landlessness. Throughout the analysis, it emerges that the choice of projects, namely, classrooms, a crèche and a multi-purpose community center, were not priorities that could be linked to the rebuilding of the local economy. Finally, a brief description of the CBPWP is given. It is argued that focusing on the revival of farming or agricultural activities would have better stimulated revival of local economic growth.

2.5.2 The social and historical profile of Groutville

Groutville lies along the Umvoti River, about 65 km from Durban and less than 15 km from the Tugela River. The area is a mission reserve started by Reverend Aldin Grout round about 1836 (Luthuli, 1962:19). The community started off as a small community of Christian converts. They became known as the “abasemakholweni” (converts), a people in their own right, with their democratically elected chiefs, the most famous of whom is Chief Albert John Luthuli, one of the Presidents of the African National Congress. He became the chief of the Groutville Mission Reserve in 1935.

The nearest town to Groutville is Stanger, now called KwaDukuza. The name Stanger comes from the first town planner of the town, William Stanger. KwaDukuza was the name of the Royal Kraal of King Shaka of the Zulu people. One of the centers of attraction in town is the monument of King Shaka, said to be built on the site of his grave. It becomes a hive of activity every year when the National Heritage Day (24 September) is observed. The population of KwaDukuza today is 35% - 40% Indians, less than 5% whites and the rest Africans (Mhlongo, February 2001). In 1935 the area was populated by less than 5 000 people. Today it has grown to more than 250 000 (Mhlongo, February 2001).

The study area, Groutville is about 5 km to the south of the administrative center of the KwaDukuza Municipality. The KwaDukuza area of jurisdiction includes major areas such as Stanger and beach towns, namely, Ballito, Tinely Manor, Blythedale Beach and Zinkwazi Beach. Further inland there are settlements such as Groutville, Shakaskraal, Umhlali and deep rural farm areas such as Driefontein, Mgigimbe and Doringkop. The topography of the area is a mixture of undulating hills, a pristine coastal strip and steep topography on the western boundaries (KwaDukuza General Survey Report, 2002). The dominant land use outside of the urban areas of KwaDukuza is sugar cane. There are a few patches of forestry plantations inland. Land taken up by other forms of agriculture is limited. The primary rural landform in areas such as Driefontein is agriculture with farmhouses, compounds and smaller rural settlements scattered throughout the area.

It was and still is a largely Christian community with a mixture of well-educated and semi-literate people. The community of Groutville was pioneers both in converting to the Christian faith and in education. Luthuli (1962:27) recalls that Groutville produced a distinguished little group – a university lecturer, an eminent editor, and the first Zulu women graduate. They depended on crop and stock farming. They led a lifestyle that made them to be the envy of other neighboring rural communities.

2.5.3 Local economic issues

Luthuli (1962:22) describes Groutville as a “small settlement of peasant farmers eking out a modest existence on the soil”. However, the Land Act of 1913 and lack of access to markets, and credit meant that the present day Groutville could no longer thrive on farming. The situation is made worse by the size of plots and inferior land. Unlike in the mid 19th century, the problem now is not so much lack of “capital to work on the whole land” (Luthuli, 1962:27). It (the problem) is the shortage of land. As early as 1836, families occupied on average of 375 acres (Luthuli, 1962:57-58).

Groutville used to have a subsistence economy based mainly on the cultivation of sugar cane. According to Luthuli (1962:58) this was introduced as early as in the days of Reverend Grout. However, the 80’s and the 90’s have seen a drastic decline in sugar cane farming. The researcher believes that there were various reasons for this. Much as sugar cane is a cash crop, it is not an annual crop. The cost of labour, transport and processing at the sugar mills drastically reduce the net-income of households. As Mhlongo (February, 2001) puts it, “because of the shortage of land, and also as a result of the quota system, Groutville peasants could not grow as sugar cane planters”.

The other causal factors for a decline in commercial farming in Groutville, are lack of access to markets, credit, infrastructure and education, which inhibit poor people’s ability to develop themselves (Luthuli, 1962:27; May, 2000:2). It must be said that sugar cane farming is a labour intensive industry. However, subsistence farming relies on family members as source of labour and the use of unsophisticated technology. This means that even though there could be unused and potentially cultivable land, only small areas can be planted and weeded by family members (Todaro, 1991:309). The creation of farming co-operatives to start small-scale commercial farming could make agriculture an important source of jobs and income generation. The injection of capital and good farming management expertise would go a long way in addressing the challenge of unemployment. No effort seemed to have been made in this regard in Groutville.

The present-day Groutville is faced with growing levels of poverty and unemployment. There are very few industries or factories in the area. The major sources of employment are sugar cane plantations, sugar cane processing plants and SAPPI, a paper industry in the nearby KwaDukuza and Mandini industrial areas. The problem of Groutville and KwaDukuza as a whole is what Todaro (1991:38-39) explains as “open unemployment” – a situation where there are “people who are able and often eager to work but for whom no

suitable jobs are available”. According to the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) of KwaDukuza Municipality (KwaDukuza IDP, 2002:29-31) unemployment is a challenge. It states that, “only 7.9% of the total population is working.... of the potential workforce - i.e. 15 – 65 years, only 40.2% are employed or are working...”. Education and training is also a challenge that compounds the poverty and unemployment situation. The latest statistics indicate that 13.4% of the KwaDukuza potential workforce has none, or basic education level, 29.5% has a primary education, 48% a secondary education and 8.9% a tertiary education (KwaDukuza General Survey Report, 2001:27 and KwaDukuza IDP, 2002:30).

The inadequate supply of services and high levels of unemployment, have been cited as some of the critical factors in the struggle for development (May, 2000:2 and Randall in Cole ed., 1994:164). Access to physical services remains a challenge. About 37.7% of the population of KwaDukuza has full waterborne sanitation, and 33.4% have access to basic latrines. The housing situation indicates a correlation with levels of unemployment, poverty and poor access to physical infrastructure and services. In the whole of KwaDukuza, about 52.9% resides in formal houses, 29.1% in informal houses and 17.4% in traditional houses (KwaDukuza General Survey Report, 2001:34). Any development intervention in Groutville should aim to deal with these multi-dimensional set of factors in a holistic way.

2.5.4 Conclusion

The Groutville of today shows a failed urbanization process, town planning and poor infrastructure, through shacks, poor roads and small footpaths that run in between mostly informal houses. An increase in the number of houses, through uncontrolled sub-letting of plots and shacks, has also meant an increased demand for schools and other community facilities. Sugar cane farming has also declined considerably, thus employment opportunities and the means of earning a living have shrunk (Mhlongo, February 2001). However, the irony is that the sugar cane industry is still thriving in KwaZulu-Natal and has, through usage of appropriate technology diversified to include the production of by-products.

The problem with regard to the failure of the community of Groutville as subsistence sugar cane growers is linked to the Land Act of 1913 and lack of access to finance (see Luthuli, 1963). Subsistence agriculture on small plots is the way of life for the vast majority of African people. However due to diminished cultivable land and absence of technology and

machinery, the community of Groutville, like most other rural African communities can no longer subsist through small-scale family farming. Access to land and training in modern farming methods should form an integral part of integrated rural development initiatives.

The development needs of Groutville in the 90's were already vast. They included the need for land, access to clean water, social and health infrastructure like education and clinics. The intervention of the Department of Public Works was thus timely. It either needed to revive agriculture as a source of employment and food security or should have identified other types of sustainable economic activities. As Luthuli (1962:58) correctly cautions, exclusive reliance on sugar cane, would not help people to "lead a materially prosperous existence".

The intervention of the Government through the CBPWP as an attempt to improve the social and economic conditions of the area was limited in scope. This was attributed to budgetary constraints and inadequate planning. The CBPWP should have explored the rejuvenation of small-scale farmers, through strategies such as co-operatives, as an option for providing longer-term employment. There seems to be a disregard for agriculture as one of the areas through which socio-economic development can take place, especially in rural areas. The rich history of the place and people skills as small-scale farmers and land-owners, the so-called "indigenous knowledge systems" (see Treurnicht in Kotze (ed), 1997:93) was overlooked. In addition, the strain on limited resources such as water, poor roads and clinics as a result of uncontrolled urbanization was also not taken into account. The intervention was by means of special programmes of the CBPWP, called Siyakha and the Clean and Green Campaign. Both are being discussed in the succeeding section. The study conducted showed that in addition to being limited in scope, the CBPWP's choice of projects did not correspond with the priorities of the community (see KwaDukuza IDP, 2002).

2.6 The CBPWP in Groutville: Siyakha and the Clean and Green Campaign – A Case Study

2.6.1 Introduction

It is necessary to first provide an outline of the nature of the two special programmes that were implemented in Groutville as part of the CBPWP model. These were Siyakha and the Clean and Green Campaign. The evaluation further focuses on the socio-economic objectives of both projects (RSA, Department of Public Works, 1997:2-11) and whether

these supported local economic objectives (Bond & Khoza, 1999:33). It also examines their potential to specifically achieve sustainable results in terms of job creation, skills transfer and the value of assets created. Finally, the issue of whether the choice of the projects contributed to meeting the basic needs of the people of Groutville is reflected upon (Cole, 1994:227; ANC, 1994:14-52, and South African Republic, ILO Report, 1996:16-17). The first special programme to be dealt with is Siyakha followed by a review of the Clean and Green Campaign. In order to locate these projects in the context of the CBPWP, the following background information is necessary.

2.6.2 Background

The CBPWP was allocated about R85m in 1997 for a fast-track poverty alleviation programme (RSA, Department of Public Works, 1997:10-11). In disbursing these funds the criteria were to target the poorest of the poor, women, youth and violence-torn areas. This meant that KwaZulu-Natal was to receive priority. In the Stanger-Groutville area this intervention took various forms or strategies. The first was a special employment creation project (SECP) of the Independent Development Trust (IDT). In the 1996-97 financial year, a public-private sector partnership between the Department of Public Works and the South African Sugar Association (SASA) gave more impetus to SASA's Siyakha projects. Another public-private sector initiative involved the South African Breweries with its "Clean and Green Campaign in Groutville" (Mhlongo, December 2000). For this programme, the Department of Public Works allocated R10.8m; and the South African Breweries contributed R3m (Qiniso and Associates, 1998:4).

2.6.3 The Nature of Siyakha

The projects under review were part of a programme strategically dubbed "Siyakha"-literally translated as, "we are building". The "we" or "Si-" denotes adherence to one of the fundamental principles of the Public Works Programme. It conjures images of partnership, participation and building or working together for a better life (ANC, 1994: 2-13, and Bond & Khosa, 1999:6-8).

Siyakha was a Public Works Programme funded by the Department of Public Works and facilitated and part funded by the Sugar Industry (RSA, Department of Public Works, 1996:1-8). Siyakha targeted "disadvantaged communities within the sugar producing regions of South Africa" (Department of Public Works, 1996:1 and Simelane, February,

2001). This explains, in part, why Groutville was chosen, noting its history as a small-scale sugar cane farming community (Luthuli, 1962:58).

The projects that were sponsored under the Siyakha / CBPWP were in the first instance those that aimed “to create employment” and fell under any one of four categories:-

- Environmental projects;
- Rural access roads;
- Community facilities and
- Domestic water provision’ (Department of Public Works, 1996:1-8).

The specific projects, which are the subject of this study, were all broadly defined as “community facilities” (RSA, Department of Public Works, 1996:1-3). These were, a community hall in Ward 3, Nokukhanya crèche, situated on the main road to Tongaat, and two classrooms at Gwabe Junior Secondary School. In line with the goals of Siyakha, these assets were useful or necessary. However, the researcher argues that, the extent to which they could provide sustained employment and “sustainability of skills” (ANC, 1994:17) was limited.

There are two other important aspects about Siyakha. The one is whether these assets added value to the broader socio-economic objectives and philosophy of the RDP. The other is whether Siyakha met the expectations or priorities of the people in terms of development needs (RSA, Department of Public Works, 1996:1, Abugre in Cole, 1994:127-131). The researcher argues that it fell short as a “basic needs approach” intervention (ANC, 1994:14 and Burkey, 1993:3). It is, however, asserted in the official records of the Department of Public Works (1996:1-8), that project selection was based on compliance with the following factors:

- Community and regional priority;
- Community participation in the selection;
- Employment and labour intensity;
- Training opportunities provided;
- Institutional and financial sustainability and
- Contribution to holistic development (Department of Public Works, 1996:1-8, ANC, 1994:75-87 and Bond & Khosa, 1999:3-7).

These factors suggest that there was full participation and alignment with the socio-economic objectives (Kotze & Kellerman in Kotze (ed). 1997:38, Burkey, 1993:211, and ANC, 1994:7). This study sought to disprove these assertions and show that participation was poor and the socio-economic impacts were not sustainable. The second sub-project of the CBPWP in Groutville was called the Clean and Green Campaign.

2.6.4 The nature of the Clean and Green Campaign

The Clean and Green Campaign, initiated in 1996 as a public-private sector partnership between the Department of Public Works and the South African Breweries, was also implemented in some parts of Groutville with the support of the Town Council, albeit with minimal success. The implementation agency was the Keep South Africa Beautiful Association (KSAB). The objectives of the project included:

- Kick-starting a community based waste management system;
- Cleaning of the areas and greening of public places and
- Creating jobs during the project cycle and beyond (South African Breweries, 1999:1-2).

It was intended that the project would have an impact on cultural improvement, employment of women, single parents and youth, capacity building through skills development, and training in administration, finance and technical matters and physical environmental impacts (Independent Development Trust, 1996:24).

These were noble and yet ambitious objectives, which could not be met due to a number of factors. The success of the Clean and Green Campaign in Groutville was thwarted by, among other things, “internal political tensions” and financial constraints. According to Khonjwayo (1997:1-3) there was a tussle for political hegemony between the ANC and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP). In order to defuse the situation, the Town Council found itself compelled to deviate from the original rationale for their support of the project.

According to the then Chief of Health for the Town of Stanger, Mr. Sahling, (in Khonjwayo, 1997) the rationale for supporting the project, included considerations such as the following:

- The KSAB programme “did not exceed the Town Council’s budget quite seriously” (Sahling quoted in Khonjwayo, 1997:1);
- Only half of the area of Groutville would be covered as a pilot study;

- The selected area would reflect political heterogeneity and
- That it had unquestionable capacity to create employment for local people, with unemployed women as the primary target.

The benefits of the programme soon became clear to locals in the form of job creation and a healthier, cleaner environment in Groutville. Those members of the community whose areas were excluded began to cry “foul”. Implicit in their protestations was the feeling that their exclusion was politically motivated (Mhlongo, Interview, December 2000). In an attempt to pre-empt the re-emergence of violence and further polarization of the community, the Town Council “shot itself in the foot”. It succumbed to pressure and extended the programme “to cover the whole of Groutville” (Khonjwayo, 1997:2). The net effect of this decision was that the Town Council incurred massive expenditure, which had not been budgeted for. The KSAB had made it clear that there was no way they could pour in additional resources for this abrupt enlargement of the scope of the programme.

In addition to simmering political tensions, the Town Council began to question the wisdom of continuing with a programme, which had a budget for only a 12 month period. It could not be sustainable beyond the withdrawal of KSAB funding which was to end at the expiry of this 12 month period. The revenue base at the time was limited. Only a section of the citizens, the so-called “statutory communities”, paid rates. One of the chief aims of the programme had been to alleviate poverty and thus indirectly deal with political violence and crime (IDT, 1996). It was also hoped that the Town Council would save money on refuse removal and wages earned by workers would enhance a culture of payment for services. The tensions and bickering among the community and political parties over how the project was implemented and managed, “defeated the main purpose of the project” (Mhlongo, Interview, December 2000).

2.6.5 Conclusion

Poverty alleviation programmes in general and the Groutville case in particular, had a specific strategic focus on women. This sector is “among the highest categories of the poor” (Gwagwa, 1997:1). Their plight could be alleviated through labour-intensive community projects that specifically target women. According to the external evaluation of the CBPWP by the Community for Social Enquiry (CASE) and the South Africa Republic, (ILO, 1997), 42% of the beneficiaries throughout the country were women.

Projects, like the Clean and Green Campaign, should be such that they do not require skills that women do not possess. The Clean and Green Campaign, which is essentially about refuse removal, is typically labour intensive and low on skills and thus could absorb more women. It also inculcates a sense of ownership of the village and education with regard to environmental issues. These are some of the values of the Masakhane campaign. Thus it was unfortunate that the Clean and Green Campaign could not be sustained in Groutville.

However, the impact of the Clean and Green Campaign nationally was significant. About “641 jobs were created over a period of 12 months, some 142250 households benefited, all nine provinces were covered and some 46 communities benefited” (Qiniso and Associates, 1998:3). In the case of Groutville, the researcher sought to demonstrate that the project failed due to political tensions and a flawed public participation plan. Failure to take into account and successfully manage local politics supports Burkey’s (1993:40-42) view that development workers often have “little sense of the social reality of local communities”. Therefore a number of intervening variables, such as poor public participation, the choice of projects etc., derailed the CBPWP in Groutville and undermined the intended impact on the intended beneficiaries.

The CBPWP in Groutville has been described as a programme that aimed to create jobs, transfer skills and contribute to holistic development planning. The Clean and Green Campaign was also seen as a labour intensive project that targeted mostly women. It was however aborted due to political tensions and insufficient funds. The study showed that both projects were flawed with regard to factors such as public participation and training. The failure of the Clean and Green Campaign in particular will be attributed to mishandling of local political dynamics, which also suggests a flawed public participation model. The problem that was observed by the researcher centers upon how the CBPWP as a model for the RDP was conceptualized and implemented in Groutville. The next section describes the problem and the proposed answer, which is the hypothesis.

3. Problem statement

The National Public Works Programme was designed essentially to be a job creation programme through basic infrastructure delivery and repair (RSA, Department of Public Works, 1997:11-12). It was designed to create assets such as water supply, sanitation, clinics, etc. in a way that would have significant socio-economic impact (RDP, 1994:14-31). These assets were indeed part of the CBPWP programme in the Stanger-Groutville district. The question that has not been investigated is whether there was / is a link between

the construction of these assets and the principles of sustainability of both the assets themselves and their long-term socio-economic benefits in the area. The CBPWP as a social intervention (Bless & Higson - Smith, 1995:47) to alleviate the plight of the poor did not have sustained impact. There are various intervening variables that minimized or eroded the influence of the CBPWP, as an independent variable, over the conditions of life of the dependent variables, the target group (Bless & Higson - Smith, 1995:29-32). Put differently, did the outputs have a visible long-lasting impact on the “standard and quality of life” of the people? Thus the study sought to evaluate the success of the CBPWP in achieving sustainable results in job creations, capacity building and in terms of value of the assets (Bless & Higson - Smith, 1995:47 and Brynard & Hanekom, 1997:19-25).

4. The hypothesis and variables

The hypothesis was – “the Community Based Public Works Programmes that were implemented by the Department of Public Works in collaboration with SASA (South African Sugar Association) in Groutville during the 1996-97 financial year did not lead to sustained and better quality of life among the women and youth”.

This is an inductive hypothesis, which is as Brynard & Hanekom (1997:19-20) state, “based on what the researcher observes and what he or she identifies as a problem”. It is based on the observation that the dependent variable, the standard of life of the people of Groutville, do not show positive change from what it used to be before the implementation of CBPWP, the independent variable.

The CBPWP is designed as an intervention strategy to combat poverty and unemployment through the creation of economically productive assets or infrastructure (RSA, Department of Public Works, 1997:11-17). The researcher sought to evaluate the success of this social intervention (Bless & Higson - Smith, 1995:47). The typical category of assets would be clinics, community centers, market stalls, crèche or schools, etc. The strategic objectives include a whole range of intervening variables, such as empowerment, skill development, entrepreneurship etc., which should collectively improve the lives of the people. The lives of the people constitute a dependent variable in this regard, as it was expected that there would be positive impact on the people as a direct result of the CBPWP (Brynard & Hanekom, 1997:19-22; Huysamen, 1994:10-13, and Bless & Higson - Smith, 1995:29-31).

5. Operational formulation of the hypothesis

It is hypothesized that the building of community assets such as a crèche, school classrooms, a community hall and a multi-purpose center, whilst it may have provided benefits in the short-term, did not have long-lasting or sustainable positive socio-economic impact on the lives of the beneficiaries.

There are two main variables – one is the quality of life of women and youth and the other is the Community Based Public Works Programme. The independent variable is the Community Based Public Works Programme. The objective is to show that it did not have a sustained or long-lasting positive impact on the life (quality of life) of the people of Groutville, especially women and youth. Therefore women and youth of Groutville are the dependent variables.

It is difficult to measure quality of life. Most social scientist and researchers use quantitative indicators such as the number of jobs created, wages earned, skills acquired (see South Africa Republic, ILO Report, 1996; May, 1998:38-39, and Todaro, 1991:87). Based on the view that the quality of life or the extent of poverty is determined by access to basic needs such as water, food and shelter, increased access to these would enable one to infer a change in the quality of life (Todaro, 1991:87, and ANC, 1994:14-31).

The following were used as indicators: level of unemployment among women and youth, types of jobs, short-term nature of jobs created, usefulness of assets created for women and youth, skills gained and their continued usefulness, etc. The hypothesis argues that the majority of women and youth are still unemployed, are directly affected by poverty and their skills are not marketable or they do not have job related skills at all.

6. The significance of the research

The Department of Public Works was responsible in partnership with SA Hulleys, a sugar company, for funding and technical support for the Groutville CBPWP projects. These projects, which included a community multi-purpose center, a crèche and school classrooms, were officially launched by former President Mandela on 16 June 1996. Parallel to the construction of the infrastructure was the Clean and Green Campaign, a project co-funded by the South African Breweries and the local Town Council to promote a clean and healthy physical environment.

The general perception of the people towards Government's ability to create long-lasting jobs and thereby a basis for a better life for all is very negative and at best skeptical. Whilst

the South Africa Republic, ILO Report (1996) looked at jobs created, it did not look at whether these were of a short-term nature or not. This study evaluated deliverables such as assets created, jobs created, skills gained and evaluated these in terms of whether they, at this point in time, still have value to the people (see Everatt, 1997:10-12). The primary focus was on whether, through these deliverables, there is positive impact on the lives of the people that can be attributed to CBPWP.

It was important to investigate the question of sustainability (Cole, 1994:4-5) and to find out what could be done to make interventions of the nature of CBPWP more sustainable since money, time and resources have been spent by Government since 1994 (see Bond & Khoza, 1999). More importantly these projects created expectation among the poor that they would result in a better life as promised by politicians in the last national and local government elections.

If the perception and experiences of the people remain negative with regard to the impact of the RDP, it would become difficult to get them to participate in future projects and programmes. The Municipal Systems Act, (Act 32 of 2000, Chapter 4. Sections 16 and 17) obliges municipalities to promote a “system of participatory governance”. This includes public participation in the development of Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) (see Todes, 2002:3-4). Without public participation, no meaningful development would take place and all other strategic objectives of the RDP such as empowerment, peace and stability in KwaZulu-Natal would become unattainable. Violence has been and still continues to be a problem in the Stanger-Groutville area and some of the generally recognized causes are poverty and unemployment.

B. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1. Introduction

According to Birley & Moreland (1998:30), “methodology is a decision-making process that is predicated upon sets of background or assumptions”. This section deals with how the study was operationalised. The hypothesis focused on real life experiences of people, and as Birley & Moreland state (op. cit:30), is “based on assumptions” (Brynard & Hanekom, 1997:29). The method used for the collection of data incorporated questionnaires, direct observation and focus groups (Bless & Higson - Smith, 1995:149, and Huysamen, 1994:139-140). Data collection techniques (Brynard & Hanekom, 1997:30) used will be discussed under subjects and instruments. Finally an analysis of variables in the hypothesis is done.

2. Subjects

The subject of the study was a sample of women, youth and men drawn from the community of Groutville who use the assets and participated in the project, as workers or initiators. The geographic size of Groutville is considerable. The population parameters for the purpose of the study had to be well-defined and demarcated (Bless & Higson - Smith, 1995:87-88). Therefore non-probability sampling, which is purposive sampling, was used to identify a focus group, which consisted of the features described below (Bless & Higson - Smith, 1995:87-88). The focus group consisted of twenty (20) people, excluding the former Mayor. As Huysamen (1994:44) suggests, using a purposive sample helped the researcher to “deliberately obtain participants in such a manner that the sample obtained may be regarded as representative of the relevant population”.

In order to test some of the variables of the hypothesis, a sample of the target population was chosen such that it had “properties” that easily link it to the variables and the objectives of the main variables, that is the CBPWP (Bless & Higson - Smith, 1995:88 and Huysamen, 1994:44). As such the sample was based on who “participated” and on those residing close to the location of the assets. The other consideration that made this sample representative included the descriptive features such as “unemployed”, “retrenched”, “housewives”, “out of school youth” and “school going youth”. This choice was based on the background information or assumptions that this was how the target group was operationally defined when the decision to implement these projects was taken (Birley & Moreland, 1998:30).

3. Research instruments

A set of questionnaires was distributed to fifty (50) members of the community who either worked in the projects or was participants in the process leading to their launch. It consisted of ordinary members of the community, members of a local development committee and youth activist. A simple accidental or availability sampling procedure (Bless & Higson - Smith, 1995:89) was used, the main criteria being those who could be reached with ease, or lived closest to the location of the projects. This sample consisted of 40 % women, 20 % men and 40 % youth. The composition of the sample is based on the principle that one of the aims of the CBPWP was to “target youth and women” (RSA, Department of Public Works, 1997:15-16). It accommodated what Huysamen (1994:48), calls the “variance (heterogeneity) of the variable”.

This was essentially a summative evaluation research that sought to examine the “usefulness” of a “social intervention” - the CBPWP (Bless & Higson - Smith, 1995:47-55 and Caldwell & Spinks, 1988 in Birley & Moreland, 1998:125). Thus both quantitative – number of jobs created, and qualitative – quality of life, value of assets - data collection methods were used (Caldwell & Spinks, 1988 in Birley & Moreland, 1998:125). These included research instruments such as historical research, observation, interviewing, and focus groups (Kruger, 1994 in Birley & Moreland, 1998:121 and Brynard & Hanekom, 1997:29-30). The historical research entailed a review of literature and research reports on job creation programmes instituted by Government and development agencies such as the IDT in the past (Brynard & Hanekom, 1997:12-14).

The other research instruments were questionnaires and interviews (Bless & Higson - Smith, 1995:106-112) which both helped formulate a perspective on the value and worthiness of the CBPWP projects (Birley & Moreland, 1998:125) or what Bless & Higson-Smith (1995:46) refer to as “usefulness of social interventions”. To obtain broad comments and views on issues such as “participation” (De Beer & Swanepoel, 1998:20), “non-scheduled interviews” (Bless & Higson - Smith, 1998:106-107) were used. In addition to this a set of fixed questions that channeled participants to give specific answers, e.g. on whether they thought the choice of projects was in line with their needs, was used. Bless & Higson - Smith (1995:107) refers to this method as “scheduled structured interviews”.

Participatory observation as one of the approaches in qualitative research was also used (Gorman & Clayton, 1997 in Birley & Moreland, 1998:120-122). A period of one month,

in November to early December 2000, was spent visiting the area to observe the use of the community hall and the multi-purpose center. In addition to participatory observation, interviews were held with the principal of a crèche and the former mayor of KwaDukuza-Stanger (see Chambers, 1997:156 regarding participatory observation techniques).

In addition to the mentioned techniques the focus group was a useful strategy that enabled analysis of the perceptions of participants. It provided insight as to how Government's intervention strategies are perceived by the community (Kruger, 1994:6 in Birley & Moreland, 1998:121). The former mayor of Stanger, played a pivotal role in the establishment of the projects under review, and hence was equally able to put together a representative group and skillfully facilitated discussion, sharing of "experiences" and built "consensus" among the group (Bless & Higson - Smith, 1995:113-114).

4. Analysis of variables

The methods and instruments described above helped in the analysis of the variables and provided insight into the attitude and perceptions of the community with regard to the overall effectiveness and outcomes of the CBPWP (Herman et al, 1987 in Birley & Moreland, 1998:126).

The research hypothesis states, "The CBPWP did not lead to sustainable socio-economic impact in Groutville". Socio-economic impact is a broad concept, however, focus was on some of the specific objectives of the programme, namely, job creation and skills development or empowerment. These two objectives can be measured quantitatively, i.e. number of jobs created, as well as qualitatively, i.e. improved access to basic facilities, ability to engage in other sustainable income generating activities, etc. There are ranges of "intervening variables" (Bless & Higson - Smith, 1995:33), that could have had an influence on the CBWP's ability, the "independent variable" (Brynard & Hanekom, 1997:20) to lead to what the Department of Public Works (1997:1) refers to as "sustainable results" (see ANC, 1994:19, and Bond & Khosa, 1999:5-7).

Project design and mode of implementation has a lot to do with what the project is able to achieve (Mullins, 1998:6-8, and Brinkerhoff, 1991:30-31). If the process were "participatory" (Chamber, 1997:102-128 and De Beer & Swanepoel, 1998:20) and adhered to the principles of sustainability (see Todes, 2002:25), sustainable development would have been enhanced. Thus one of the key "intervening variables" (Bless & Higson - Smith, 1995:33), namely, participation (Coetzee in Coetzee & Graaff, 1996:146) had a role in the

success of the CBPWP in Groutville. Both the focus group and the questionnaires sought to establish whether, in line with a people-centered approach to development, (ANC, 1994:5) if there was sufficient participation or not. The design of the instruments and procedures used helped in confirming the assumptions on which the hypothesis was predicated, namely that participation was flawed and the outcomes were not sustainable (Birley & Moreland, 1998:30).

5. Procedure

In designing the research project, the researcher had to delineate “the focus of the research” (Bless & Higson - Smith, 1995:64). A link had to be created between the “conditions” (Bless & Higson - Smith, 1995:46) of the people, namely, unemployment, and the stated objectives of the Government, namely job creation (ANC, 1994:18). In the questionnaire and all other data collection methods used, a relationship was conceptually established between the CBPWP, the assets built and the condition of unemployment. For example, the CBPWP (independent variables) was simply defined to refer to all assets and projects (dependent variables) started by the Government and the fact that the reason(s) for it was the realization that people needed jobs (dependent variables) among other things, in order to have “a better life” (dependent variables) (Huysamen, 1994:65; Brynard & Hanekom, 1997:20 and ANC, 1994:17).

The focus of the study was followed by an identification of a sample from which data was to be collected. The community of Groutville that resides in the vicinity of the CBPWP projects identified by the researcher was chosen as “the unit of analysis” (Huysamen, 1994:38 and Bless & Higson - Smith, 1995:64). Two types of projects were used as a case study, namely the Siyakha and Clean and Green Campaign. Three units of analysis were further identified, namely, individual activists, organizations or institutions (the Development Committee, the Mayor, and the Department of Public Works), and the “period of time” (Huysamen, 1994:38-39 and Bless & Higson - Smith, 1995:64-67). The period on which the study focused was between 1996-97, during which time, the CBPW was implemented in Groutville. Part of the research methodology was the observation of communities’ behaviour towards the assets during the period November-December 2000, i.e to observe whether the community used the various assets or not.

The questionnaires were distributed shortly after a discussion with the former Mayor who had agreed to facilitate participation from the relevant respondents. Whilst the researcher was in the area observing the usage of the facilities, a meeting with the focus group took

place in December 2000. At the beginning of the year, the functioning of the crèche was also observed and a further meeting took place with the former Mayor to reflect on the way the respondents had responded to questions.

The problems encountered in the above-mentioned procedure had to do with the timing of the study. The study was begun after the completion of the projects. The construction work was over and the Clean and Green Campaign had been abandoned. Thus, it was not possible to measure the dependent variables (unemployment, condition of youth and women in relation to jobs, etc.) before the intervention of Government through the CBPWP, the independent variable (Bless & Higson - Smith, 1995:68-70 and Huysamen, 1994:71-72).

6. Data analysis

6.1 Establishing the focus of the research

Data filtering and mind mapping, which according to Brynard & Hanekom (1997:48-50) are techniques of data analysis, had to be applied during the study. The general field of interest on which the study was based is “community development”. A review of literature focused on this phenomenon and the strategies adopted by Government post the 1994 first democratic elections. The study was on the National Public Works Programme as one of these strategies. However, the target population of the study and the topic was limited to the impact of the CBPWP, as an implementation model of the NPWP, on the target group in Groutville during the period 1996-97.

In order to contextualise the project, a review of views of various authors was necessary, especially at a conceptual level. The views of some of the authors are elucidated upon in the preceding sections, the literature review, and are integrated below in the context of the data obtained. First data (Brynard & Hanekom, 1997:48) on the subject, community development (De Beer & Swanepoel, 1998:17-28), had to be filtered so that the research remained focused on the chosen topic and the suggested hypothesis.

6.2 Integration of the viewpoints on Public Works Programmes

According to the South Africa Republic, ILO Report (1996:16) community-based works differ from public works in terms of nature and functions of their outputs. The outputs of community-based works are for use by a specific community. The South Africa Republic, ILO (1996) explains that community-based works can only be qualified as community-driven if there is “full community participation”. Public works programmes are broader in

nature and function. They provide public assets for a broader target, such as road networks, clinics, schools, etc. (South Africa Republic, ILO Report, 1996:16). According to the ANC (1994:1-6), the Public Works Programme is defined in the context of the RDP as part of the basic needs approach to development (Everatt, 1997:4-5).

In this study, a basic needs approach paradigm informed the application and analysis of the Public Works Programme. The idea of public participation and people-driven projects form part of this approach and therefore, unlike the ILO, no distinction is drawn between the phrases “community-based public works” and “public works”. The former is conceptualized as the implementation model of the Public Works Programme, the operative words being “community based” and “people-driven”. The outputs, in the case of Groutville, were public utilities, based on “nationally set norms and targets” even though it could be argued that they are of use to specific communities (South Africa Republic, ILO Report, 1996:16).

It (public works) is defined as a programme through which the Government intervenes in the plight of the poor, in under-resourced areas by providing basic needs and social infrastructure such as roads, clinics, schools etc. (Khoza, Magubane & Muthien, 2000:6). The perspective of Khoza, Magubane & Muthien (op. cit) support the official policy of Government. Chapter 3 of the White Paper on Public Works records that public works programmes implemented in many countries sought to create jobs through “accelerated labour based infrastructure development” (RSA, Department of Public Works, 1997). It integrates the “people-driven” process, the principle of co-ordination and partnership between tiers of Government and parastatals and organizations within civil society as defined in the RDP (ANC, 1994:4-5). It is this idea of collective effort that saw the implementation of the CBPWP in Groutville taking place through a partnership with the private sector (RSA, Department of Public Works, 1996: 1-3).

The research problem centered on whether Public Works and its implementation model, the CBPWP did have sustainable impact on the lives of the people of Groutville. Did it address the needs of the poor in terms of jobs and skills in a sustained manner? The data obtained suggested that jobs were only provided during the construction phase. In other words, they were of a short-term nature. The White Paper on Public Works (1997) concedes that these programmes are not in themselves the solution to long-term unemployment and poverty. Does this suggest a departure from the principle of integrated approach to development planning and sustainability? (ANC, 1994:4; Conyers & Hills,

1990:58-60 and Singh & Titi ed., 1995; 112). What do we understand by “sustainability” and was it a justified expectation on the part of the Groutville community that the CBPWP would provide long-term employment?

6.3 Integration of views on sustainable development

Sustainability development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Brundtland, 1987:43 in Cole (ed), 1994:228). Since social interventions of the type of CBPWP are about changes to the conditions under which people live or are about improving the material well being of the people, sustainability should be conceptualized differently (Khoza, Magubane & Muthien, 2000:6 and Bless & Higson - Smith, 1995:47). It should be seen not only in terms of the life span of assets or infrastructure created but of socio-economic impact on the lives of the poor or those targeted by a development programme such as the NPWP.

The type of projects implemented in Groutville could not have provided long-term employment. The exception, being the Clean and Green Campaign, which, although it had the potential to be sustained much longer, collapsed for other reasons. Both the White Paper on Public Works (1997) and the RDP (ANC, 1994) accept that Public Works Programmes by themselves cannot provide long-term sustainable jobs. For example, one of the specific objectives of the Public Works Programme is to “empower communities through providing job opportunities, transferring skills and creating community assets in a manner which increase chances of becoming self-employed or entering the formal economy” (White Paper - Public Works Towards the 21st Century, 1997, Chapter 3). Similarly the RDP (ANC, 1994:19) links job creation and training as a goal for self-employment capacity. The emphasis is more on skills and sustainability of self-employment capacity and the participation in the formal economy or in small and medium enterprises.

The concept of development, for purposes of this study, is defined in terms of the paradigm characterized by what Chambers (1997:9-10) explains as a “massive shift in priorities and thinking... from things and infrastructure to people and capabilities”. This approach in conceptualizing development highlights the fact that development has to have the following as building blocks: participation, social learning, capacity building, empowerment, and sustainability (Kotze & Kellerman in Kotze (ed), 1997:38-39). The

overall strategic objective of the CBPWP was to contribute to the mission: “a better life for all” (ANC, 1994:4). This development paradigm draws in the notion of sustainability, puts people at the center and is distinct from the term “growth” (Todaro, 1991:87 and Burkey, 1993:221).

Aburge (in Cole, 1994:125) argues that sustainable development entails a complex interaction among at least three environments or systems: the socio-political, the economic and the ecological. This suggests a link between the life span of infrastructure, e.g. a clinic in Groutville, and its value to the people. Sustainable development evokes notions of capacity and empowerment in that it suggests that people should, as an indicator of development, become self-reliant and that such a condition should last long or is on-going. Fair (1982:24) suggests that this state is demonstrated when there is ability to rely on one’s own resources, to control, direct or define development goals in a manner that reflect real needs and values. Coetzee & Graaff (1996:146) agree. They state, “the only way in which self-reliance can be attained is to work with the assumption that the beneficiaries of development will also be its contributors.”

In line with Chambers’ (1997) approach, the concern of the study was to see whether the programme had a sustainable effect on the well-being of the community. As Chambers (1997:9-10) puts it, well-being should mean “good quality of life, access to basic services....” The CBPWP, as defined above, is structured as a model for people-centered development that uses a basic needs approach. Through the meeting of these “basic needs” it was hoped that jobs would be created and new skills learnt for continued economic survival. Thus as measures of impact on “quality of life” and “access to basic services” (ANC, 1994:11-12) specific socio-economic indicators were delineated.

According to Simelane (February 2001) the key impacts to be measured arising from these projects included physical, environmental and human impact improvements. The latter refers to issues like cultural improvement, employment (number employed and sustainable employment, which was to target women, single parents and youth) and capacity building (skills developed in areas such as administration, finance etc.) (RSA, Department of Public Works, 1996:24-25).

The view that the impact (Simelane, February 2001) was achieved beyond the construction phase of these community assets was the primary concern of this study (Bless & Higson - Smith, 1995:47). The usefulness of the CBPWP as a social intervention in Groutville cannot be measured only in terms of what it achieved in the short-term, namely the human

and physical impact, but more so on whether the impact, namely jobs created, skills gained, usage of facilities, have been sustained or not. Bless & Higson - Smith (1995:47) defines social interventions as “any attempt to change the conditions under which people live”. The conditions under which the people of Groutville lived have only marginally or symbolically changed. Additional classrooms, a crèche and a community center were built, but the study sought to show that overall the benefits thereof were not sustainable. However, the CBPWP as a basic needs approach to development, which puts emphasis on people, participation, sustainability and integrated development plans and programmes is not being devalued (Stewart in Kotze ed., 1997:2-3 and Burkey, 1993:70).

7. Conclusion

In this section the study process and methodology chosen was explained. The methodology was both qualitative and quantitative. It is difficult to measure social phenomena such as poverty and social conditions such as quality of life. However a report titled “Key Indicators of Poverty in South Africa”, prepared for the RDP Office (1995), established benchmarks for the measurement of poverty and quality of life (see Todaro, 1991; May, 2000 and World Bank, 2000). Access to basic facilities such as piped water, housing, food, electricity, schools, clinics and roads were used as indicators. In addition the level of unemployment is also identified by many social scientist as a key variable in the cycle of poverty (see May, 1998; Elbadawi & Hartzenberg, 2000 and Todaro, 1991). Thus the research methods used, such as participatory observation and questionnaires, identified access to these basic facilities and jobs as primary indicators of the impact of the CBPWP.

The subjects of the study were the residents of Groutville who were associated with the projects, namely, the crèche, classrooms, community hall and the Clean and Green Campaign. The research instruments used included questionnaires, interviews, a focus group, and observation. All these instruments were used to ascertain how CBPWP performed in relation to some of the building blocks of community development. The baseline question was whether the intended beneficiaries participated in choosing the type of projects that were implemented. Using the basic needs indicators, questionnaires and interviews were structured to request respondents to indicate whether the choice of projects was aligned to their priority of needs or not. Since the respondents were associated in various ways with the projects, it was easy to make the research process participatory (see Chambers, 1997:102-128). It allowed the respondents to reflect on their own experiences,

past and present and to judge for themselves whether the CBPWP had a sustainable effect on them or not.

The variables of the hypothesis were also analyzed above. The procedure used was based on steps outlined by Bless & Higson - Smith (1995) and data analysis and integration of viewpoints of other authors was based on the model of Brynard & Hanekom (1997). In this regard there was convergence of views on the conceptualization of development interventions. The view of the researcher, which informed the hypothesis, namely that the CBPWP in Groutville had fundamental flaws, was consolidated by these viewpoints. The main flaw was poor public participation. The end result, as established in the hypothesis, was that there was no sustainable development impact that could be linked to the CBPWP.

The section that follows analyses the impact of the CBPWP from the viewpoint of the respondents and assesses the performance of the programme in relation to prominent moderator variables, such as public participation, training, etc.



C. RESEARCH FINDINGS

1. Introduction

As indicated above, the data obtained and analyzed, showed that the Public Works Programme on its own could not provide long-term employment. It should lead to capacity or empowerment to establish sustainable employment or engage in an economic activity. It thus suggests that for the CBPWP to have sustainable impact on the beneficiaries, factors such as public participation, training, empowerment, and sustainability should be measured as variables that would have enabled the main variable, the CBWP, to have an impact on the beneficiaries, or the dependent variables. This section is an outline of the findings of the assessment of CBPWP in relation to these factors. It ends with an analysis of the hypothesis in relation to the summary of the findings.

2. Summary of the findings

2.1 Level of public participation

“.... programmes can be regarded as being community-driven when the choice of outputs derives from full community participation in the identification of priorities and the selection of projects” (South Africa Republic, ILO Report, 1996).

A particular perception to how the projects were managed emerged in response to a question that asked respondents to rate on a scale of 1 and 7 the extent of their participation during four stages of the project life cycle. Scores between 1 and 2 were interpreted as being strong, between 3 and 5 not so strong and between 5 and 7 as weak. Respondents were asked to indicate their perceptions in relation to four stages of the project, namely, project identification, decision-making, implementation and evaluation. Tables 2 (a) to (d) below show how the community and the Department of Public Works perceived the level of participation:

How would you rate community participation at various stages of the projects, indicated below, on a scale of 1 - 7?

Answers:

Table 2 (a): Community participation during project identification stage

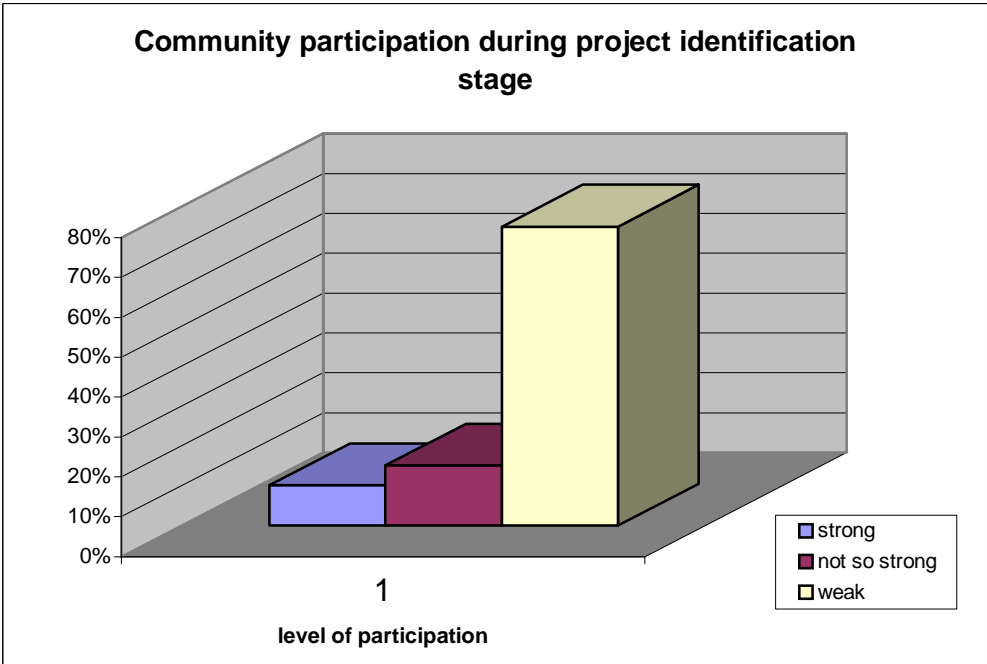


Table 2 (b): Community participation during project - decision making stage

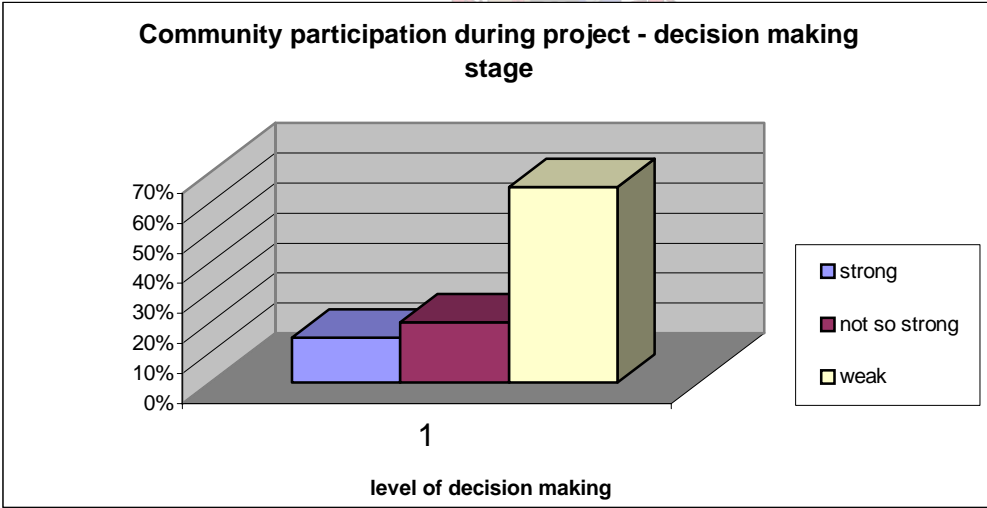
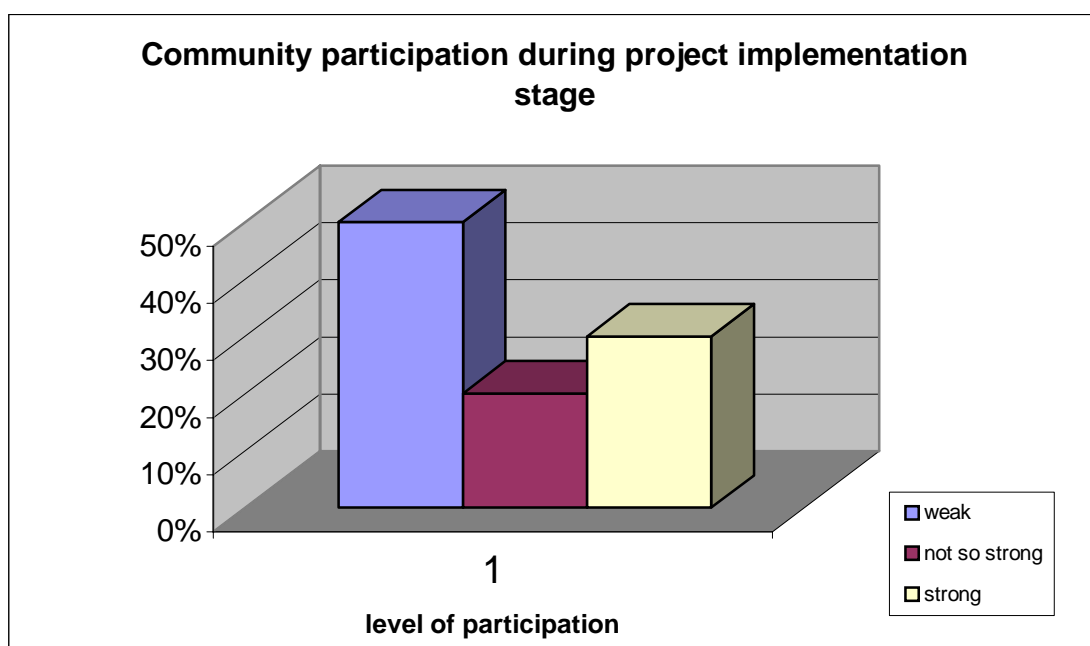


Table 2 (c): Community participation during project implementation stage



Interestingly the official reports from the Department of Public Works saw the issue of participation differently. In response to the question ,“how was the project identified”? the following picture emerges in the Department’s official report on the CBPW-Siyakha project:

Table 2 (d): Community participation during the project identification stage, according to Department of Public Works (Source: Department of Public Works, Siyakha Appraisal Summary Report, 1996).

Community Hall in Ward 3 – Gledhow / Groutville:				Mass Meeting	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Committee Meeting	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local Authority	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nokukhanya Creche in Ward 2 Gledhow / Groutville:				Mass Meeting	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Committee Meeting	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Local Authority	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
Classrooms in Gwabe JS School Glendale:				Mass Meeting	<input type="checkbox"/>
Committee Meeting	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Local Authority	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

2.2 Sustainability

2.2.1 Are the facilities operational?

Table 3 (a): The extent to which the Multi-purpose Community Center was used during the period November 2000 to 5 December 2000

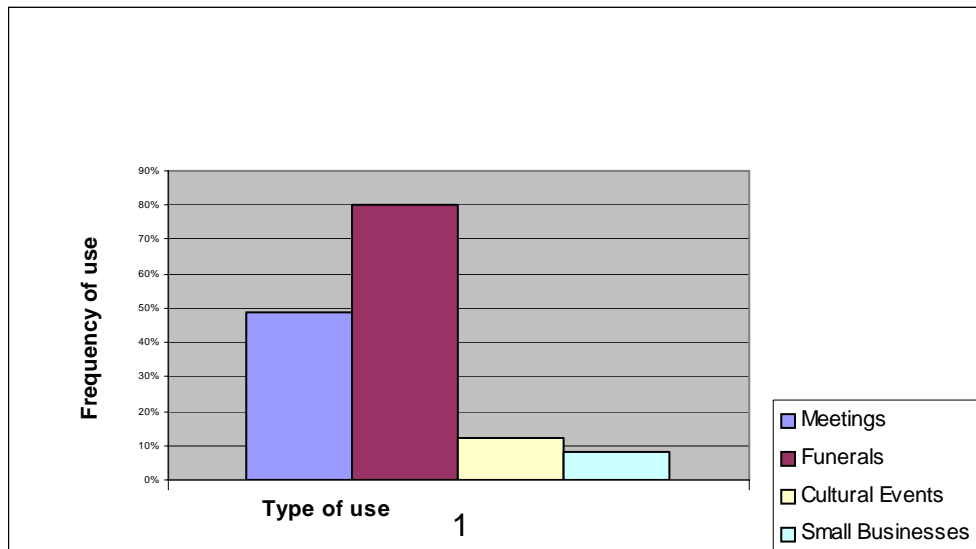
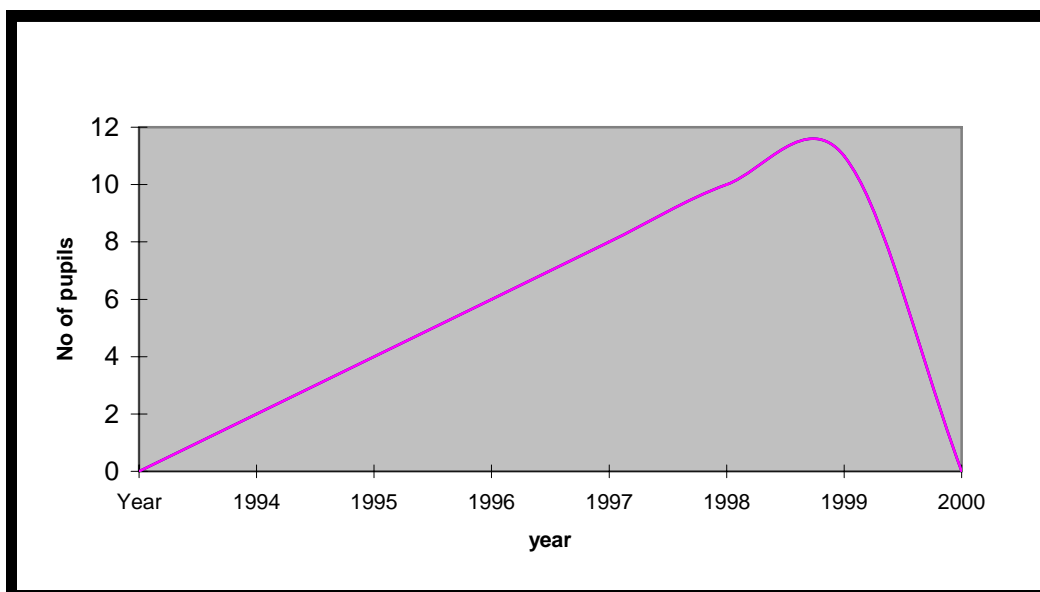


Table 3 (b): An increase in the number of pupils enrolled at crèche as an indicator of parents recognition of the educational value of a crèche or pre-school to future learning success over the period 1994 to 2001. (Source: Principal, Crèche, Interview, 5 January 2001)



A drop in enrolment figures in 2001 is simply because at the time of the interview most parents were still on leave and schools still closed in the Province.

2.3 Sustainability and maintenance of assets

A key component of sustainability is the life span of assets created. However, the focal point of the study was on sustainability of empowerment and socio-economic impact not only of assets on people but also of benefits such as employment, income and skills. The issue of skills is intrinsically linked to the maintenance of assets as an indicator of the sustainability thereof. However, the focus group was not aware of any plans to maintain the assets and did not seem to know whether any of the people were involved in maintenance work.

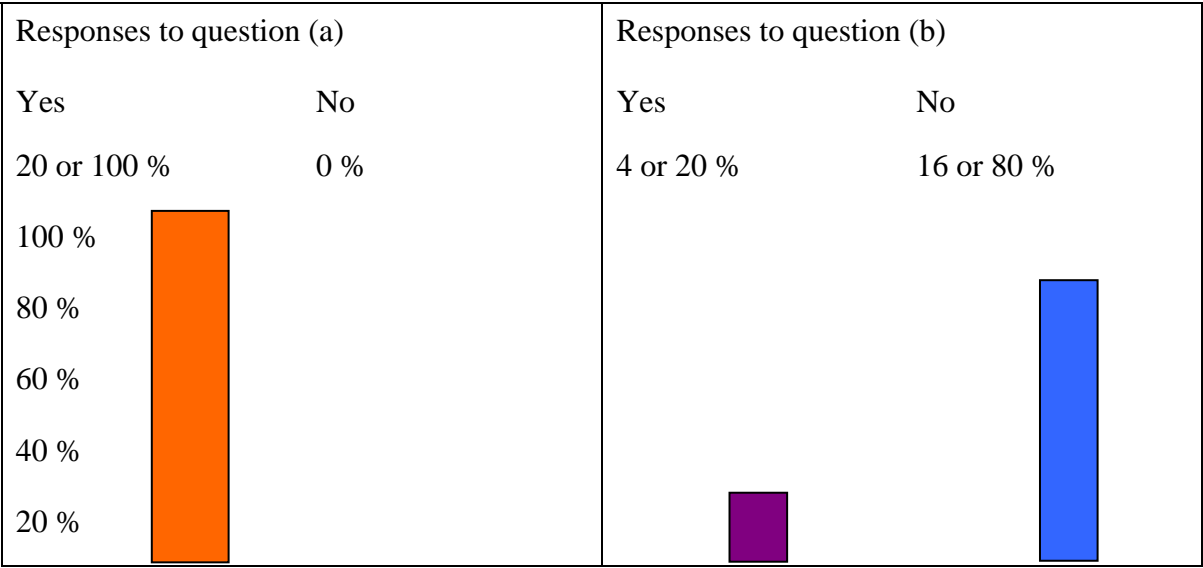
When asked to comment on the “quality of the assets”, 18 or 96% of the focus group said that the structures are of good quality. This they based on the fact that none of the buildings have shown any structural defects. “There have been some strong winds in the past and the floods but no problems were experienced”, said one of the focus group members. The group also felt that it was the responsibility of the Town Council to maintain the buildings, including the provision of services such as water and refuse removal.

2.4 Sustainability of employment opportunities

Did the choice of projects address employment as the main priority of local people?

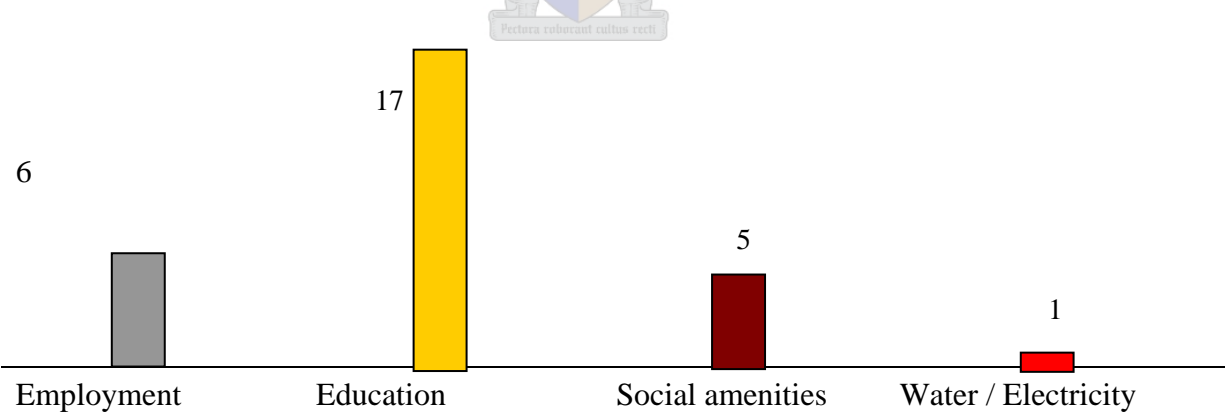
- (a) At the time when the projects were started did you think they would be useful to the community in terms of employment opportunities and
- (b) Do you still think they are useful?

Table 4 (a): Attitudes towards the projects as a source of employment during and after construction



In terms of your priorities of needs list only those that you think were /are best served through the facilities delivered beyond the project construction phase.

Table 4 (b): Perceptions on which needs the projects met the most even beyond construction phase



The majority of participants, 17 felt that the assets were of benefit to education. Only 6 thought that it helped with employment even after construction.

Table 5 (a): Perceived priorities of how the Government could help the poor. (% of respondents by location)

Priorities	Rural	Urban	Metropolitan
Jobs	52	59	79
Piped water	50	18	5
Electricity	31	28	16
Food aid	31	30	33
Housing	27	51	33
Clinics	19	7	6
Schools	19	21	20
Roads	16	12	2
Peace	8	13	31

Source: SALDRU & World Bank: Key Indicators of Poverty in South Africa. Southern Africa Labour and Development Research Unit, University of Cape Town, October 1995.

Table 5 (b): Priorities of local people in terms of their needs and expectations from Government. (Respondents by gender and youth divide)

Rating of priority	Women	Youth
1	Water	Jobs
2	Electricity	Education
3	Jobs / Housing	Youth centre
4	Clinics	Sports facility
5	Schools	
6	Peace	Peace
7	Better roads	Better roads

Source: Compiled after a brainstorming session with Groutville focus group held on 5 December 2000 in Groutville.

Who benefited from the projects through employment?

The next question that the focus group considered was who directly benefited from these projects in terms of employment. It must be noted that the target was women and youth (Department of Public Works, 1996-97, Annual Report). Although the focus group did not have official records at their disposal, they concurred with a report from the Department of Public Works that it was predominantly men and youth that were employed in the construction of the crèche, classrooms and the center. The only project that employed 95% of women was the Clean and Green Campaign. Youth aged between 18 and 24 comprised 60% of the workforce and 40 % were men aged between 25 and 45 (RSA, Department of Public Works, 1997).

2.5 Empowerment

“People who have worked on the CEP should have been exposed to training, decision-making, financial control, management issues, team work and new skills. However, they should also have some awareness of their newly enhanced skills, increased confidence and so on” (South Africa Republic, ILO Report, 1996:27).

Since sustainability of employment opportunities was limited, it meant that the prospects for empowerment were also undermined or weakened. In order to measure the (socio)-economic impact of short-term employment on employees, one had to establish the economic status of employees before being employed on the projects. Table 6 below shows the economic status of employees and is based on information provided by the focus group and collaborated by Mr. Zulu, the Provincial CBPWP Manager at the time.

Table 6: The socio-economic status of employees

Unemployed					
Domestic Work					
Housewife					
Retrenched					
Student					
Disabled					
	0 %	10 %	20 %	30 %	40 %
					50 %

In the post-project construction period, the picture had not changed much. The first four groups shown in Table 6 above were still not formally employed. The only group that had changed slightly were the students as some of them had passed matric and joined the ranks of the unemployed. Only one student was in a tertiary institution.

To further examine the sustainability of socio-economic impact on the lives of the people, one needs to look at one of the key strategic objectives of Public Works, namely, empowerment.

2.6 Empowerment through training

The members of the focus group were not aware of any training that took place or of any technical skills such as painting or brick making that workers have been able to use to date to make a living.

However, when asked to indicate what kind of jobs were assigned to local workers, it emerged that most of them were doing things like cement-mixing, plastering, etc. as table 7 below indicates. It may be that the focus group members did not identify on-the-job-training as training as such.

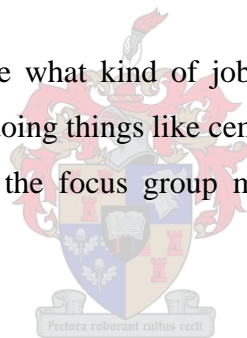
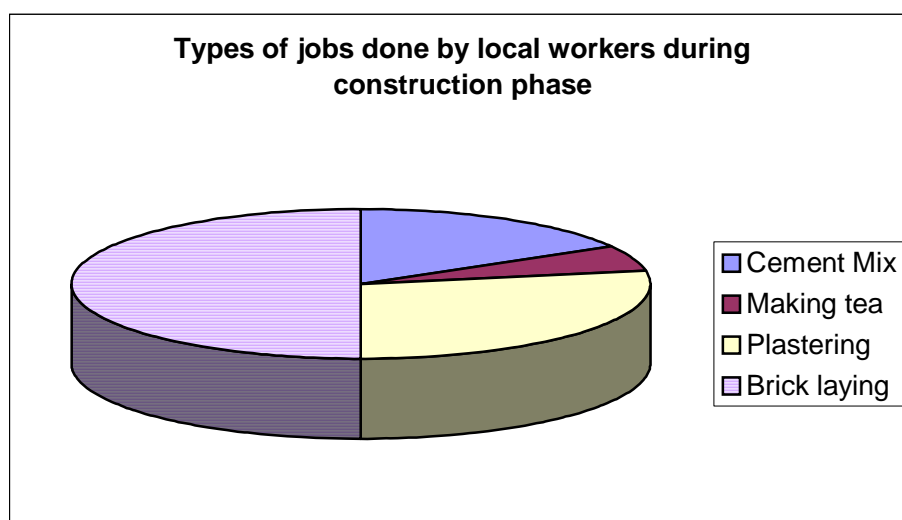


Table 7: Types of jobs done by local workers during construction phase



In summary, the results show that overall public participation was poor throughout the stages of the projects or what Burke (1999:24-36) describes as the project life-cycle.

However, the main sponsors of the projects, the Department of Public Works (see Department of Public Works, Siyakha Appraisal Summary Report, 1996) asserts that during project identification, i.e. the concept phase there was mass public participation. The sustained use of assets created is biased towards non-commercial use, namely, meetings or funerals (see Table 3(a)). The usefulness of the Nokukhanya crèche is demonstrated by an increase in the enrolment figures as depicted in Table 3(b). The view of the community on the quality of assets and long-term value was positive at 96%. The projects seem to have performed more poorly with regard to job opportunities. Finally, there appears to be no correlation between the choice of projects (Republic of South Africa ILO Report, 1996:16-17 and Cole, 1994:227) and the priorities of the people. These results have significant implications for the hypothesis. The next subsection analyzes the results in relation to the variables of the hypothesis.

3. Analysis of the hypothesis

The study was predicated on an inductive-hypothesis (Brynard & Hanekom, 1997:19-20 and Huysamen, 1994:194) – **the CBWP did not lead to sustainable results in Groutville.** This was informed by observations that suggested that the assets built by Government and the Clean and Green Campaign did not leave any noticeable impact in Groutville. This observation was consolidated by views from the former Mayor of Stanger, which prompted the decision to undertake this study. Essentially, the exercise was about assessing the effectiveness of the CBPWP, the main or independent variable (Brynard & Hanekom, 1997:20), in terms of its main goals, namely job creation and sustainability of skills, etc. (Herman et al in Birley & Moreland, 1988:126 and ANC, 1994:19).

The researcher assumed that jobs and skills to engage in income-generating activities would contribute to a better life for the beneficiaries of the projects. There was an assumed relationship between the CBPWP, the main variable, and jobs, skills and empowerment (Brynard & Hanekom, 1997:21). These in turn are expected to influence and change the conditions of the people, the dependent variables, through income generation and capacity to sell their new skills in the job market. Based on the knowledge that the CBPWP by itself could not be a solution to long-term employment and poverty, assessment of its effectiveness focused on certain factors or “moderator variables” (RSA, Department of Public Works, White Paper, 1997:11 and Bless & Higson - Smith, 1995:32). These moderator variables in this case included factors like participation, training, and empowerment. These factors were investigated or measured to see whether or not they

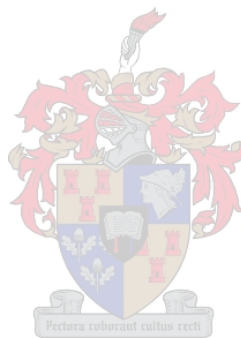
modified the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variables (Bless & Higson - Smith, 1995:32-33). The other intervening variable (op. cit.) considered was the level of skills of the community at the time of the projects.

The CBPWP is accepted as one of the implementation models of the RDP, which is a coherent, integrated policy framework for development (ANC, 1994). Public participation is one of the key principles of the RDP and most authors agree that without it there is no meaningful development (Burkey, 1993:59; Todaro, 1991:88-89; Swanepoel, 1998:55 and see RSA, Municipal Systems Act, Act 32 of 2000). In terms of the earlier definition of development, it is correct to conclude that the extent and nature of public participation in the CBPWP would have had an influence on the development goals of the projects. The issue of choice of the type of projects (Republic of South Africa, ILO Report, 1997:59 and Burkey, 1993:211) by the beneficiaries would have ensured that they formed part of the projects from the concept stage (Burke, 1999:26). The choice of project would have more likely been aligned with their priorities (see Table 5(b)). Thus public participation was an intervening variable that could have had an influence in the manner in which the CBPWP impacted on the people in terms of their development needs.

The other variable that had an influence in the ability of the independent variable to deliver sustainable skills, was training. Skills development or transfer is one of the goals of the NPWP (RSA, Department of Public Works, White Paper, 1997:11). The RDP (1994:19) specifically says that programmes should “encourage and support employment through small and medium enterprise creation to ensure sustainability of skills”. Skills transfer is a strategy for the promotion of self-reliant participatory development (Burkey, 1993:206-207). In the case of Groutville, there was no evidence of purposeful skills transfer or training with a view to empowering the workers to run their own small construction companies or to start their own refuse removals companies after the demise of the Clean and Green Campaign. Thus the low level or absence of training and skills transfer acted as a barrier to sustainable development in that no new skills were left for people to start their own small enterprises as the RDP (op. cit) envisaged.

Therefore, the hypothesis that the CBPWP did not lead to sustainable results is supported by the results. The people, dependent variables, did not get long-term jobs. It has been stated that long-term jobs could not have been a realistic goal of the CBPWP in this instance. However, it has been shown that other variables such as public participation and

training, could have empowered people with skills to engage in other enterprises or income-generating activities.



D DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

1. Discussion of the findings

1.1 Introduction

The results above show that public participation was one of the factors that impacted on the success of the CBPWP. The other consideration was the value of the assets to the people measured in terms of sustainable use. Job creation and skills transfer are some of the variables in the relationship between the CBPWP and the beneficiaries or the target population. This section examines the results in relation to the variables of the hypothesis and consolidates the conclusion that the CBPWP did not lead to sustainable results in Groutville. A summary of the findings is outlined in respect to each of the key factors that are indicators of the performance of the CBPWP. This is followed by consideration of the validity and generalization of the results and recommendations.

1.2 Public participation as a variable in the CBPWP in Groutville

One of the key strategic objectives of the Government's National Public Works Programme is people-driven development. This is measured by the extent to which the CBPWP is not only community-based but is community-driven (Republic of South Africa, ILO Report, 1996:59). Therefore one of the building blocks of the development, public participation, must be discernible at all stages of the project. These stages include and are not limited to, project need identification, prioritizing or choice-making, implementation and evaluation.

As tables 2(a) – (d) above indicate, the dominant perception was that Government largely imposed the projects. To the extent that public representatives did not take the community or their constituencies on board in the development and management of the whole programme, as the then Mayor of Stanger indirectly concedes below, such a perception is understandable. The views of the community on the extent to which there was participation during the project identification stage of the projects described the rate of public participation as “weak”. The philosophy behind Public Works Programmes places a high premium on the ability of a community to identify and prioritize their needs.

Programmes are regarded as community-driven when the choice of outputs derives from full participation in the identification of priorities and selection of projects (Khoza, Magubane & Muthien, 2000, and Republic of South Africa, ILO Report, 1996). It is thus

interesting to see that 65% and 50% of the respondents felt that public participation was weak during the stages of decision-making and implementation respectively. According to the then Mayor of Stanger, Mr. Mhlongo (December, 2000), this should be read to mean that there was no direct participation by ordinary members of the community. The elected representatives of the community were responsible for prioritizing, project selection and overall management of the whole programme. Both women and youth would have preferred, as top priority, water and jobs respectively as Table 5 (b) above indicates. The youth would have preferred more emphasis on training so that they are empowered with more skills and better access to work opportunities.

The National Department of Public Works and the Stanger Town Council were identified as institutions that initiated the projects. The fact that 75% of the respondents thought that the community played little or no role in choosing projects could well suggest that some of the key objectives of the programme were not met. It could also mean that these projects were not community-driven per se in terms of the ILO definition of the phrases – “community-based”, “community-driven” and “public works”. However, as Table 2 (d) indicates the official position of the Department of Public Works is that there was “mass participation” in the project identification stage.

It is difficult to reconcile these two contradictory perceptions about the extent of public participation in the identification of projects. The community insisted that there were no mass meetings at which projects were identified. The question is how “mass” were these meetings that Public Works alleges were the uniform way in which all these projects were identified. There was mass or public participation later on in the life of the project where report backs were given and also when the projects were being launched. For example, a local development committee and the Stanger TLC were in the forefront of arrangements for the official opening of a community hall/multi-purpose community center. Based on the information provided by grassroots structures, the researcher supports the community perception that the entire programme was in the main imposed in a top-down manner upon the community by Public Works and perhaps in collaboration with a few elite’s in the area. There was no bottom-up grassroots participation in a people-centred fashion.

The former Mayor of Stanger further supported this view. According to him (3 February 2001) lack of participation or apathy in governance and development initiatives in the post 1994 period is a national phenomenon or crisis. Mhlongo (3 February 2001) says that this is one of the unfortunate developments in South African politics. People are beginning to

be spectators; there is no vibrant politicization and mobilization that characterized the struggle era. There is now, what Mhlongo (3 February 2001) terms “politics of elitism”. He conceded that typical of this political landscape, Councillors took decisions with the Department of Public Works on behalf of the populace.

According to the Republic of South Africa, ILO Report (1996:57) an immediate objective of projects of infrastructure provision, the likes of the multi-purpose community center project of Groutville, would be “full community participation in sustainably operational infrastructure facilities and services at the community level”. A project that is initiated by the community is more likely to remain operationally sustainable as that community identifies with and owns it, i.e. a sense of ownership is developed. This is based on the assumption that the community would have chosen a project that addresses what they need the most, in this case, employment. Full or strong public participation should be assessed not only in terms of project implementation or construction of a facility. What the CBPWP wanted to achieve was presumably a multi-purpose community center, which actually works and which provides needed services.

The problem was that nationally, very few local authorities were seriously involved from project inception. This would have ensured public participation and correct identification of priorities with a view to sustaining the project through community buy-in and ownership. For example, the Clean and Green Campaign may have not been a priority for Groutville; as such it was seen as only necessary in so far as it provided employment. About 50% of the Groutville community disposes waste in their own way, i.e. pits (Mhlongo, 3 February 2001). The failure to address sustainability by not doing the basic things in a development programme, based on the principles of a people-centred approach, was one of the fundamental flaws in the way the CBPWP Projects and the Clean and Green Campaign were conceptualized, sold, bought and implemented in Groutville (Mullins, 1998:6-8).

1.3 Empowerment and capacity building in the CBPWP in Groutville

Public participation also enhances one of the strategic objectives of the Community Based Public Works Programme – empowerment or capacity building. Empowerment was an important RDP objective for Public Works Programmes to avoid a culture of dependency through handouts (ANC, 1994:18-19 and Bond & Khoza, 2000:6). Empowerment includes the building of capacity to take decisions about one’s destiny, needs or wants and also

involves the idea of being able to make choices. At a practical level it means training and imparting of life and technical skills that increase potential for employment. The capacity to do these things is not created or built when priorities and choices in relation to development are based on a top-down approach. The CBPWP in Groutville fell short on this aspect.

The success of the CBPWP should also be measured in relation to the empowerment of women, another level of the dependent variable, who were identified as the main targets of the projects. Table 7 above show that a small segment of the workforce was involved in tea-making. The focus group felt that it was obvious that this was comprised of women only. However, according to official records of the Department of Public Works, women were employed in other types of jobs as well. This included cement-mixing and administrative work such as the handling of time-books (Zulu. S, Interview, 12 December 2000). It does appear therefore that empowerment for women in terms of learning new skills were in the area of administration and routine management issues. The only project where women played a major role was in the Clean and Green Campaign.

It is also true that women were relatively more empowered than men in the arena of decision-making and leadership. This is borne out by the fact that the composition of both the Development Committee and the Project Launch Committee was predominantly women. For example, the chairperson of the Launch Committee was Dr Luthuli, the late Chief Albert Luthuli's daughter. Women were also at the forefront of the fund-raising campaign for the official launch function. It was difficult to ascertain whether this trend has been sustained, as there were no other development projects to examine to assess the extent of women's roles.

Empowerment is to be achieved through strategies such as (on-the- job) training and skills transfer. According to the Department of Public Works (1997), training constitutes one of the requirements to be satisfied by prospective contractors for all infrastructure construction projects. Between 6% and 8% of the project budget for the community hall, the crèche and classrooms was set aside for training provision (RSA, Department of Public Works, 1996). Apart from training in skills such as brick-making, electricity or installation of pipes, contractors are required to transfer skills in areas such as project management, financial, managerial and administrative skills. The fact that the bulk of the workforce, about 45%, was involved in brick-making suggests that they either had the knowledge before hand or they were indeed trained by the contractor. The main strategic thrust

according to Everatt (1997:11), is “to equip workers with basic skills needed for asset maintenance as well as small-scale entrepreneurship”.

1.4 Sustainability of CBPWP in Groutville

Beyond the notion of public participation in the development phase of the project, the critical aspect according to the ILO (op. cit.) is that facilities provided through these Public Works Programmes do actually work and provide needed services. Continued public participation in, and responsibility for, the utilization of the center for the various purposes for which it was built, are the useful indicators of whether the projects were a success or not. The community leadership, in particular the former Mayor of Stanger, Mr. Mhlongo, shared the concern that public participation should be seen beyond project construction and should be more about whether the community still make use of these facilities or not - that is, whether the crèche; the center and the community hall remain operational and contribute to a better quality of life.

Tables 3 (a) to (b) show the frequency and type of use of the two facilities. According to the principal of a local primary school the level of school readiness among pupils admitted to grade 1 since the establishment of a crèche has improved. The culture of sending children to crèches or informal pre-schools started long ago in Groutville, the difference being that these were mainly home-based (Mhlongo, 2000). According to Budlender (in May, 2000:104), targeting a crèche by the Department of Public Works was in line with Government policy on Early Childhood Development (ECD) in terms of which pilot projects focused on community – or home-based services (outside formal schools).

In Glendale/Groutville in 1996 there were 25 children and 2 teachers using a community hall as a crèche. There was demonstrable commitment from the community for the crèche. Each household had agreed to contribute R20 to sustain the makeshift crèche (RSA, Departmentt of Public Works, 1996). Additional classes that were built in a local school eased the problems of overcrowding. It can thus be assumed that these facilities are having a positive impact on the community (Mhlongo, December 2000).

1.5 A sustainable and integrated programme

Central to the findings of the research, is the failure of the CBPWP to link infrastructure development and other programmes such the Clean and Green Campaign to other local development programmes in the area. This view argues that the CBPWP, in the case of Groutville, was not an integrated and sustainable programme (ANC, 1994:4). Sustainable

development entails a complex interaction among at least three environments or systems: the socio-political, the economic and the ecological (Abugre cited in Cole, 1994:125). At the center of these interactions is human kind.

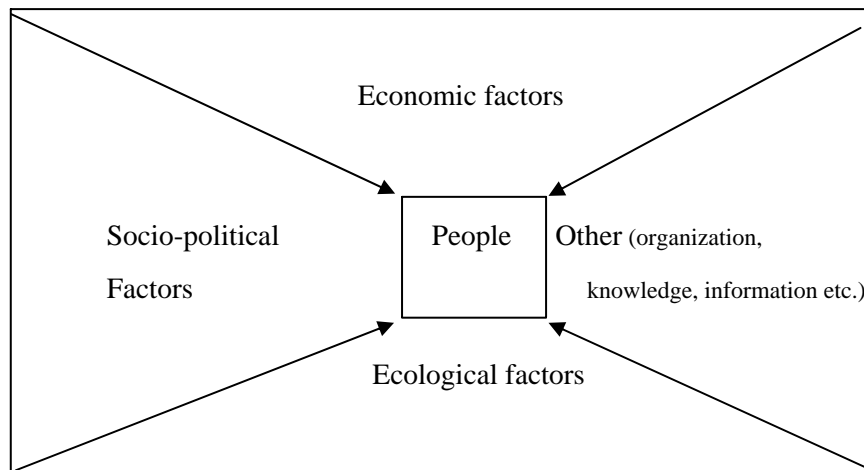


Figure 1: A conceptual model of some of the critical inter-playing factors that impact on sustainable development (based on Abugre's framework in Cole, 1994:125)

At a practical level the sustainability of development relates to the life span of physical assets or infrastructure and their value to the people. The value of a clean and healthy environment, which was one of the objectives of the Clean and Green campaign, could not be measured in quantifiable terms. It is only the economic value, i.e. earnings and capacity to buy basic household needs that would have easily become noticeable. However, absence of air pollution, waste on the ecosystem and the environment would have ensured that whatever development achieved directly or indirectly through the programme, as Brundtland in Cole puts it (1994:228), met “the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”.

The environment within which the programme exists has to be exploited for the benefit of mankind without “damaging the prospects of a better life for future generations” (Abugre in Cole, 1994:125 – 126). This requires an understanding of the programme environment and the ability to classify environmental factors according to whether they are favourable or unfavourable or uncertain and hostile. Brinkerhoff (1991:15) defines programme environment as “those factors outside a programme that affect it's functioning”. He further classifies them into two, namely, the proximate environment and the distant environment.

The failure of the Groutville programme was largely due to an inter-play of both the distant and the proximate social, economic and political environmental factors. Inadequacy of

resources such as water, poor public transport system and shortage of schools, have always been cited as factors that fuel rivalry within communities. This rivalry often developed into bloody conflict. Groutville had also just emerged from fierce political rivalry and violence. There are still indications of mistrust and divisions along party political lines. This was clear with the demise of the Clean and Green Campaign. As discussed in the previous section, the socio-political and economic factors were hostile. In such situations the provision of funding by external sources has the effect of neutralizing the impact of hostile distant and proximate factors. However, this was not to be as the main sponsors of the programme, the South African Breweries and the Town Council were both not in a position to provide additional funding.

Sustainable development and resources constraints are a socio-political challenge. It requires not only a theoretical understanding of programme management but policy decisions that base development programmes on integrated, holistic and participatory approaches. It also requires policy decisions that ensure equitable access to and distribution of resources (Abugre in Cole, 1994:127). This is even more important in politically polarized communities such as Groutville. The distribution of resources and decisions as to the scope and focus of a programme would be seen as equitable and fair if development agencies or sponsors involve the communities in all the stages of the programme.

The collapse of the Clean and Green Programme in Groutville and the poor performance of Siyakha raise an important lesson or observation about the conceptualization of “sustainability”. There has to be a paradigm shift that is underpinned by developing a holistic perspective on sustainability that takes into account a whole range of area specific environmental factors. In the case of the Groutville project the hostile factors included, inter alia, political polarization, division between so-called statutory and non-statutory communities and the issue of budgetary constraints. There was also no institutional link between the Siyakha and Clean Green Programme despite the fact that they took place almost at the same time. The approach ignored one of the key principles of the RDP in that it was not integrated with other initiatives such as the Masakhane Campaign and the local Integrated Development Plan.

1.6 Organizational capacity and community building

The other aspect that is often neglected in community projects is the absence of healthy social structures, systems and networks. Due in part to the effect of the migrant labour

system, unemployment, crime and political violence, community values and morals that once signified Groutville during the days of Chief Luthuli, seem to have declined. A programme that seeks to address one of these ills, namely unemployment, has to simultaneously attempt to work along-side community building initiatives that built sound social systems within which a community sees and defines itself. A “sense of community needs” to be built; one based on tolerance and the ability to live alongside ones’ political adversary. In such a situation the value of self-help and collective action can be seen through the sustained willingness to work together and prolong the life span of a programme and the assets deriving from it.

A social and political environment where a community lives in harmony is a prerequisite for self-reliance and self-esteem, which in turn is a breeding ground for creativity. However, a point needs to be made that creativity is enhanced by existence of some form of organization as a vehicle for community development. It also relies on access to institutional support, information and knowledge and not exclusively on self-esteem (Burkey, 1993:40-68; and Cole, 1994:127-128). As Cole (1994:128-132) argues, organizational development within communities in the context of development provides a catalyst for change and institutionalization of development imperatives.

The problem of organizational capacity is compounded when the funding agent or an implementing agency does not know local conditions such as the social and political dynamics. Knowledge of the local politics and the relationship between community institutions would help the external development agency to ensure that the project is tailor-made to suit the needs of the community and enhance social and political cohesion. Lack of knowledge of community dynamics was demonstrated in both the CBPWP project and the Clean and Green Programme. There was political pressure to fast-track delivery. The result was that, in the rush to deliver, many issues such as proper consultation, involving of grassroots structures, training of staff and sustainability, could not be given appropriate attention (Mullins, 1998:5).

1.7 CBPWP and job creation in Groutville

Job creation is one of the priorities that Government seeks to address through the National Public Work Programme. To achieve this, the NPWP’s infrastructure provision projects predominantly use labour-based methods of construction. The 1993 national survey of 9,000 households shows job creation as the main priority. Table 5 (b) depicts local

priorities that were put together by the Groutville focus group. Both the SALDRU and World Bank (2000) and Table 5 (b) list employment as a top priority.

However, women in Groutville are more concerned about services and type of infrastructure that would result in immediate relief in their standards of living and performance of daily chores. Water and electricity feature high in their list of priorities. At the time of the Siyakha-CBPWP project in Glendale, a village in Groutville, with about 1500 households did not have access to piped water, sanitation and electricity (RSA, Department of Public Works, 1996). The youth, apart from being more concerned about jobs, prioritized infrastructure for social activities and skills development, namely schools, education and a youth skills development center. Although there were schools in all the three areas covered by the programme, a typical problem was overcrowding with a teacher pupil ratio in one Gwabe Junior Secondary School at 1:60.

1.8 Conclusion

The attitude of the community towards the projects was initially very positive. Comparing their responses in Tables 4 (a) and 5 (b), shows that expectations in terms of employment opportunities were high. However, these expectations were not adequately met - employment opportunities could not be sustained beyond project construction. Of the 20 participants in the Groutville focus group, only six (6) felt that employment opportunities continued to be provided beyond the project construction phase; whereas all of them had initially thought that the projects would provide long-term employment.

Should we read in this that one of the shortcomings of Public Works is that they provide hope or create an expectation that cannot be met or sustained? As Everatt (1997:11) puts it, Public Works, “are in danger of promising all things to all people, with the result that their central thrust will be lost”. Or is it simply that the debate on whether Public Works are short term tactics or permanent structure (Everatt, 1997:10-12) needs to be pursued with a view to a policy change in the planning and implementation Public Works? According to Mhlongo (3 February 2001), the reason could be that the 1994/5/6 Government made “populist decisions hence populist projects such as the feeding scheme, the provision of free education and health care, all of which could not be sustained”. There is a need for a realistic or pragmatic approach to Public Works Programmes in future.

The performance of the CBPWP in Groutville was examined using indicators such as public participation, empowerment, sustainability, the issue of integration, community building and job creation (Stewart in Kotze ed., 1997:2-3 and Burkey, 1993:70). These are some of the building blocks of development (Kotze & Kellerman in Kotze ed. 1997) and as such the CBPWP as an implementation model of the NPWP or the RDP should be characterized by them. The feedback from the questionnaire and the focus group support the hypothesis that the CBPWP was not a success in Groutville when viewed from the perspective of the building blocks of development. The next section is a summary of the findings.

2. Summary of the findings

The objectives of the research, as captured in the hypothesis were:

To investigate the extent to which the Siyakha CBPWP programme resulted in sustainable social and economic impact on the lives of the beneficiaries. The research strategy used key components of a people-driven development programme as indicators to measure sustainability of socio-economic impact. The other objectives were;

- to examine, through the case study, the community's perception of the extent to which they were involved and participated in various stages of the projects;
- to examine the sustainability of employment opportunities;
- to assess who benefited from the assets by evaluating sustained or continued use of those assets and whether such use contributes to a better life, and
- the issue of empowerment of women and empowerment through training.

The findings are summarized hereunder in terms of the variables identified in the hypothesis and tested during the research process.

Public participation

The Department of Public Works differs with the community on the extent of public participation. It (Department of Public Works) was of the view that there was mass participation. However, evidence on the ground lends credence to the community's perception that the level of public participation was low at all the stages of the project. The dominant perception is that much as the community appreciated the projects, the decision-

making process in relation to choice of projects was not devolved to grassroots structures, such as ward committees, churches, and other civic bodies as well as NGO's.

Sustainability

Whilst the life span and quality of assets created remains good, most of the socio-economic impact could not be maintained. Employment was only of short-term nature although on average 26.5% of the budget was allocated to employment. Training and skills transfer was also not sustained beyond the construction phase of the projects. The community did not benefit through long term job opportunities. They also did not learn new skills which they could use to engage in other productive economic activities. However there was improved access to education and the hall-cum-multi-purpose center contributed to social cohesion as it is being used for social gatherings of different sorts.

Sustainability and maintenance of assets

One of the goals of Siyakha CBPWP was to build capacity through training and skills transfer so that communities would take responsibility for the maintenance and sustainability of assets. According to empirical evidence, collaborated by the focus group, there is no evidence of community involvement in this. The reality is that the Local Authority and the Education Department are responsible for maintenance of assets.

Employment opportunities for women and youth

One of the stated aims of the programme was to target women and youth for employment and empowerment. Even though employment was of a short-term nature, there is evidence both from the departmental records and from the community that the majority of employees were the youth. The Clean and Green Programme excelled in this regard as it employed 95% of women. In terms of targeting the ultra poor, the programme is credited with having employed 40% unemployed and 30 % retrenchees.

Empowerment of women

Empowerment is ordinarily achieved through training, public participation and access to institutional and resources support. Although 95% of women ran the Clean and Green Programme there is no evidence of training in project management, administration, fund raising and financial management. Also the majority of women employed in the construction of assets under Siyakha CBPWP were engaged in auxiliary or peripheral jobs

such as sweeping, tea-making and very few, understandably the younger, were involved in administrative work or cement mixing.

Socio-economic impact

Indicators for socio-economic impacts that were considered included jobs, access to infrastructure for basic services, development of entrepreneurship and broadening public participation in economic activities. To achieve this would have called for an integrated approach in the construction of the community facilities, as was the case in Eshowe and along the N2 where roadside market stalls were built. In Groutville, there was no integrated planning or approach when the community facilities were built in terms of looking at other economically productive assets that should have been built alongside the community facilities. The Clean and Green Programme, which promised to generate local economic activity, was not integrated or coordinated neither with the Siyakha projects nor with the Masakhane Campaign.

There was no attempt to link the building of community facilities with provision of piped water, sanitation, roads or electricity in those areas adjacent to the facilities where there was a need for these services. Gledhow, a suburb about 2km north of Groutville, with a population of 7000, was a case in point. A crèche was built without any improvement of access through roads, or provision of water and electricity. Thus the impact of these projects in so far as social and economic needs of the people were marginal. Marginal because admittedly, the crèche and additional classrooms improved access to education and eased other related problems.

3. Validity and reliability in relation to the findings

According to Luthans (1995:14-15), the “value of any research is dependent on its validity, that is whether the study demonstrate what it is supposed to demonstrate”. This was a field study and as such no control or experimental groups were involved. However this does not necessarily pose a threat to generalizability and relevance, despite the fact that even a pretest was not possible in this case (Luthans, 1995:15 and Huysamen, 1994:71). The value of the study derive from the fact that it took place in a natural setting or set of conditions and was based on a real life situation (Luthans, 1995:14 and Huysamen, 1994:71-72). The study took place in a real setting where the people were talking about their real experiences and attitudes towards a development intervention of Government. Therefore, as Luthans

(1995:14) puts its, field studies tend to have better external validity because they take place in a real setting.

The research design and method was suited to a field study as it used amongst other things, participatory observation (Garmon & Clayton, 1997 in Birley & Moreland, 1998:120-122). For example, the behaviour of the people and attitude towards the assets built in the case study was observed over a period of time. In addition, in the way the study was conceptualized, a basic needs approach to development was used to construct measurements. The universality of this approach is acknowledged by a number of authors who subscribe to the humanistic school of thought on development (Burkey, 1993; Chambers, 1997). Using this perspective, the researcher used various instruments or techniques to measure the hypothesis and the variables involved. Based on existing literature on poverty, public works, employment and empowerment, the researcher moved from the premise that socio-economic impact can be measured by following the basic needs approach. The basic needs for a better life chosen were jobs, shelter, food, and access to water, roads, electricity and skills. This approach stimulated the real world and used universal measures or indicators to test the success of the CBPWP (Bless & Higson - Smith, 1995:82) and thus external validity and generalizability of the results is possible (Luthans, 1995:14 and Huysamen, 1994:69).

Huysamen (1994:65) states that the independent variable needs to be clearly defined as a construct rather than as a directly observable variable. In line with this approach Public Works was conceptualized as a model for social intervention that is goal specific and comprising of factors such as public participation, empowerment, training, sustainability, employment and gender/youth bias. Thus the instruments used, namely, questionnaires and focus group, (Garmon & Clayton, 1997 in Birley & Moreland, 1998:120-22) were based on questions that comprised of these themes as a checklist. Thus the instruments used measured what they were supposed to measure (Huysamen, 1994:112-113).

In order to establish perceptions on poverty and on what the community identified as their priorities or basic needs, the same approach used in the SALDRU and World Bank research on key indicators of poverty was used whereby a group was asked to produce a “shopping list” of their needs in order of priority. The results were similar to the SALDRU and World Bank Report and thus the researcher is satisfied as to the reliability of the outcome.

In order to retest the reliability of responses to questionnaires and feedback from the focus group, the researcher interviewed Mhlongo, the former Mayor, using the same questions. The purpose was two-fold. The first was to seek clarity on some issues. The second concern was to see whether the answers the study relied upon were reliable and remained valid, considering that it happened a month after the original interview (Luthans, 1995:15). Apart from correcting some of the inaccuracies in the literature review section and disputing an issue about the existence of a political tussle between the IFP and the ANC, the interviewee reaffirmed the answers and the way they were recorded. Thus the problem of “history and maturation” (Bless & Higson Smith, 1995:130-132 and Luthans, 1995:14) does not seem to have been a factor.

The validity of instruments used to measure constructs such as public participation and perception of priorities, questionnaires and focus group discussion, can be accepted based on the fact that there was consistency in the responses and the list of priorities related closely to that of the SALDRU and World Bank Report. However, a discrepancy between the Department of Public Works’ official reports on Siyakha and responses to the questionnaires and focus group with regard to public participation reflect the possibility of some type of measurement error, or content validity in respect of the questions (Brynard & Hanekom, 1997:40-41 and Huysamen, 1994:115-116). The question posed to the interviewees was, “who initiated the projects?” And the answer was overwhelmingly, “the National Government and the Town Council”. Whereas a question that sought to measure the same thing in the Department’s Siyakha Appraisal Report was, “how was the project identified?” And the answer is “mass meeting or committee meeting.”

The possibility of bias on the part of the Department of Public Works cannot be ruled out (Bless & Higson - Smith, 1995:79-81). It might be that the Department was intent to show that the programme is or was people-driven and thereby lend credibility to it as an appropriate strategy to implement the RDP, thus justify an increased allocation from National Treasury. It is possible that the respondents did not understand the question, or, conceptually, the words “identify” or “initiate” were in the minds of the respondents not related to “public participation”. However during the reinterview with Mhlongo he did not only support the community’s perception about their poor level of participation, he gave reasons why this was so. For example, he introduced the concepts of “politics of elitism”, “demobilization of the people” and “populism” on the part of Government. Thus no test

effect was discerned on the attitude and responses during the reinterview (Bless & Higson - Smith, 1995:80).

4. Generalization of the research findings

It is conceded that the size of the sample was small (20 participants) in relation to the size of the population (about 30 000) that benefited from the community facilities that were built. The sample was representative in that it had a gender (women) and youth bias.

The researcher sought to show that the CBPWP in Groutville did not have sustainable results in terms of socio-economic impact. The objective of the programme included targeting women and youth in the construction of specific assets, namely, a crèche, school classrooms and a multi-purpose community center. The social impact was measured in terms of the extent to which the community used these assets for social and cultural activities, social cohesion like meetings and community-building events and improvement in access to education. With the exception of better access to schooling, the only other activity for which the hall is mostly used is funerals. The economic impact was measured in terms of jobs created skills, sustainability and better access to basic needs such as water, electricity and roads.

The results have shown that the performance of the Siyakha CBPWP was dismal in so far as these objectives were concerned, in particular, the issue of sustainability. This realization promoted the Department of Public Works in response to similar findings by the ILO Report with regard to sustainability, to review their approach in 1997. The result was the Realigned Community Based Public Works Programme, which attempted to integrate the provision of infrastructure with local economic activities. The example cited in the study is the CBPWP projects along the N2 and in Eshowe, where the construction of market stalls happened alongside the upgrading of the roads and the provision of electricity.

The 1994 – 96 period was characterized by the rush to deliver a better life for all and to satisfy the populace by making sure that there was visible change. As a result populist decisions were taken. This was represented by the school feeding scheme, free health care to children under the age of six and pregnant mothers and large scale public works. Little attention was given to empowerment and financial sustainability. The feeding scheme collapsed under a wave of corruption and maladministration, the hospitals and clinics ran short of drugs and in some cases facilities created by Public Works became white

elephants. The feature was that these were handouts or short-term poverty relief initiatives with no long-term financial sustainability. The results of this study confirm the reality that the CBPWP of 1996 - 97 for a number of reasons failed to realize some of the strategic objectives of Government, namely sustainable socio-economic impact.

5. Recommendations

The provision of sustainable assets is one of the objectives of the Public Works Programme. The CBPWP, the operational plan of the NPWP, appears to have been successful in this regard. The quality of buildings, as shown by their physical conditions and suitability in relation to their uses is beyond question.

However sustainability of assets is not a stand-alone objective. The RDP (ANC, 1994) envisages infrastructure provision that is integrated with economic growth and meeting basic needs. The test is whether the assets are productive, that is, do they promote income-generating activities? Less than 10% of the multi-purpose center is used for trading or manufacturing purposes, i.e. by entrepreneurs. However as noted before, this finding cannot be generalized in terms of other Public Works Projects in KwaZulu-Natal. Market stalls alongside the N2 and between Eshowe and Ulundi are hives of economic activity.

Sustainable assets or infrastructure should be linked to the promotion of empowerment and a sense of ownership among the community. The provision of training and skills transfer is a requirement for all prospective contractors with Public Works. Although the focus group was not very vocal on this matter, various roles of workers during the course of the building process suggest that there would have been on the job training. The existence of people with skills to maintain the assets as well as a maintenance plan would indicate that people would in a sense take ownership of the assets. Unfortunately, the respondents were not aware of such a maintenance plan and some of them saw this as a responsibility of the Town Council. It appears therefore that the project failed in this area.

A greater test of sustainability relates to socio-economic impact. This can be measured by identifying the number of people employed during and after construction, and the quality of social cohesion created through utilization of the assets. The programme employed 40% of unemployed people, 30% retrenched (having lost their jobs less than one year at the time of the commencement of the projects) and 20% housewives. Targeting the poorest, as one of the concerns of Public Works, was thus a success. Of concern however was the short-term nature of employment creation. The researcher was also not able to trace the

whereabouts of these workers to ascertain whether the skills they gained during project construction had an effect on their lives or not.

Also related to sustainability is public participation. Some authors on community development cite public participation as a building block of development (Kotze & Kellerman in Kotze ed. 1997:38-39). It builds capacity and a sense of ownership of assets. The views of the respondents were predominantly that the level of public participation was low during the project identification stage. This is a critical stage as it enables the beneficiaries of development initiatives to be involved in project selection and the making of choices or prioritizing.

The Groutville experience with regard to public participation is related to organizational matters and the relationship between elected representatives and the electorate. The former Mayor of Stanger maintained that the people participated indirectly through the Council and a community-based development committee. We should assume that both the development committee and the Council operated democratically and continuously involved the people in all the processes leading to the finalization of the projects.

Is it realistic to expect a community of 30 000 people to participate in a development initiative? The answer is yes. It is the “how” that becomes mind-boggling. Should or can public participation be direct or should indirect participation suffice? The existence of democratic and representative governance or civic structures addresses this problem. This question of public participation needs to be unpacked and warrants a research project on its own.

Recommendations that might inform future policy decisions and strategies on community development are listed hereunder.

Recognize local leadership and build-capacity

In order to ensure that communities participate in the process of development, it is necessary to establish the existence of institutions or leadership structures in an area. This should be followed by leadership training so that there is capacity and ability to do strategic planning in terms of local development needs. This should ensure that there is local capacity and expertise to initiate projects, prioritize and develop project plans or business plans. In this way a development programme that evolves in a community where such capacity has been built would be “people-driven”.

Institutional Development (ID) and Organizational Development (OD)

Linked to capacity building among local leadership, is the concept of institutional development (ID). This refers to a pattern of norms or behaviour that shape and influence a community. Values such as self reliance, solidarity, social cohesion and productivity enhance community organization or organizational development (OD). This leads to Abugre (in Cole, 1994:128-129) an “institutionalised organization”, which is defined by, among others, a structure, vision, a purpose and a set of values (op.cit: 129).

ID and OD could play a critical role in sustainable development. It translates into a network of community institutions, and community based organizations (CBOs). Such networks of organizations ensure that any development agenda is community driven, people-centered and therefore relevant in terms of addressing real needs and priorities. This is important, as the Groutville experience has shown. There was clearly no, as Brinkerhoff (1991:31) puts it, “strategic fit” between what external development agencies did and what the people would have preferred, as their priority needs. This leads to the next issue, namely, Local Economic Development (RSA, Department of Local and Provincial Government, 2000:1-34 and RSA, Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, Act 32, 2000).

Local Economic Development (LED)

Project identification, making of choices or prioritization, identification of local resources should be primarily done at local level. Government and other development agencies should come in as partners with additional resources and expertise, which may not be found locally. This would mean that efforts to combat social and economic ills such as poverty, unemployment, moral decay and violence are driven locally as building blocks for local economic development.

The promotion of local economic development as a strategy for people-driven development programmes takes its queue from the Constitution. Section 152 (1) of the Constitution (Act 108 of 1996) states that one of the objects of Local Government is to “promote social and economic development”. The White Paper on Local Government (1998) also agitates for “developmental local government”. The Department of Local and Provincial Affairs is managing a Local Economic Fund to assist Local Government to stimulate local economic development as part of the Integrated Development Plan.

The objective is to have local initiatives, driven by local players using local resources, ideas and skills to stimulate economic growth and development. This programme departs from earlier Public Works approaches where most of the planning and priorities and targeting were done at a national level. It further corrects the perception held by many in Groutville that the projects were “initiated by Government and to a lesser degree by the local Town Council”.

Communicate and seek consensus on the goals and intended objectives of a programme

There should be a communications strategy on the part of all levels of government involved in a development programme as to the scope of the programme, on whether it is a short-term relief intervention or it intends providing long-term benefits to the people. Coupled with this, the role of the local community must be negotiated and clarified. These would address (a) the problem of unrealistic expectations with regard to benefits such as employment and (b) clarify the end-users’ roles in terms of maintenance of assets etc.

The communication strategy should elucidate the programme’s goals and intended benefits (Brinkerhoff, 1991:30-31), as well as the parameters in terms of financial capacity. As the analysis of the Clean and Green Programme shows, the agencies involved as sponsors did not achieve a community buy-in in terms of appreciating the financial constraints inherent in the life of the programme. Consensus on goals and benefits should be based on well researched knowledge of local needs and priorities. The interface with the community must also address the principle of sustainability, not only in terms of the life span of assets but the socio-economic impact.

This interface should take place as a pre-implementation phase, through techniques such as Participatory Action Research (PAR) (Chambers, 1997:113), and should provide answers to what happens after the launch of an asset. Through PAR, the beneficiaries should be part of the process of saying what happens to jobs after completion of a project. And what do I do with the skills that I shall have acquired say, in plumbing, or landscaping, etc? The Groutville experience seems to suggest that those who had been employed during construction of assets and would have acquired certain skills had disappeared into oblivion. It would appear no effort was made to take ID and OD beyond the life cycle of projects into establishment of small entrepreneurs that uses skills learnt while employed on the project.

Education and training for life-long empowerment

Linked to the communications strategy, communities should be engaged from the inception of the projects so that they spell out their needs in terms of the type of training and skills that they would require from the contractors that would benefit the community in the long run. Training and skills should empower local people in a way that enables them to engage in productive economic activities beyond the construction of an asset.

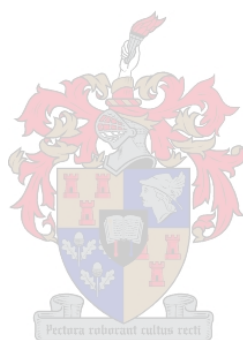
The level of education or skills base of the target of development must be established through a survey so that realistic targets in terms of technical skills to be imparted can be set and suitable materials for training be prepared. The difficulty is that the poor often do not have sufficient levels of education and literacy. According to the Republic of South Africa, ILO Report (1996:131), sustainable development to some extent relies on people living in poor areas that already have reasonable levels of education, can access and learn new skills quickly.

6. Conclusion

The intervention of Government through the National Public Works Programme targeted primarily communities in the poorest Provinces (RSA, Department of Public Works, 1997 and May, 1998:11). Another consideration was those areas ravaged by political strife due to a causal relationship between violence and inadequacy of basic resources (ANC, 1994: 5). Together with the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal is defined as one of the poorest Provinces. In the early to mid 1990's, Groutville experienced its share of political violence. The post-1994 Groutville met the criteria set by Government for social and economic rebuilding, namely, poverty and violence.

There are certain intervening variables that impacted on the ability of CBPWP to achieve the desired outcomes. The desired outcomes in the context of Groutville included jobs, a center for training and skills development, social cohesion, and sustainable local economic development. What stood between realization of these outcomes were factors such as project design, choice of projects (Republic of South Africa, ILO Report, 1997 and Brinkerhoff, 1991:30-31), levels of skills at the time of the project, levels of poverty, status of women and their skills base and the level of capacity to participate in management of projects (Adato and May, 1998:16).

The choice of the projects did not correlate with the priorities of the case study community. Nor did it link it to the stated socio-economic objectives of Government, namely sustained job creation and skills transfer (RSA, Department of Public Works, 1997:3-5). The construction method may have been labour intensive (RSA, Department of Public Works, 1997:13), but jobs created were of a short-term nature. The priorities identified by the community, included social infrastructure such as piped water and access roads. These could have provided more jobs. In addition, there was no linkage between the intervention and what used to be the local people's main form of economic activity, which is agriculture. The projects should have focused on issues such as training in new methods of farming, development of small agricultural enterprises and co-operatives. There is a link between the experiences of both the Siyakha and the Clean and Green Programme, and the view held by the author that the CBPWP did not lead to sustainable results.



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F. APPENDICES

Example of Questionnaires Used

